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**Gridiron
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Game Wins?**

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**Twenty-Two Flight Sims
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Round-up
Ever!**



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Frontier:

Elite II

PRIVATEER

STREET FIGHTER II

ALONE IN THE DARK II

Dracula

WOLFENSTEIN WITH FANGS!

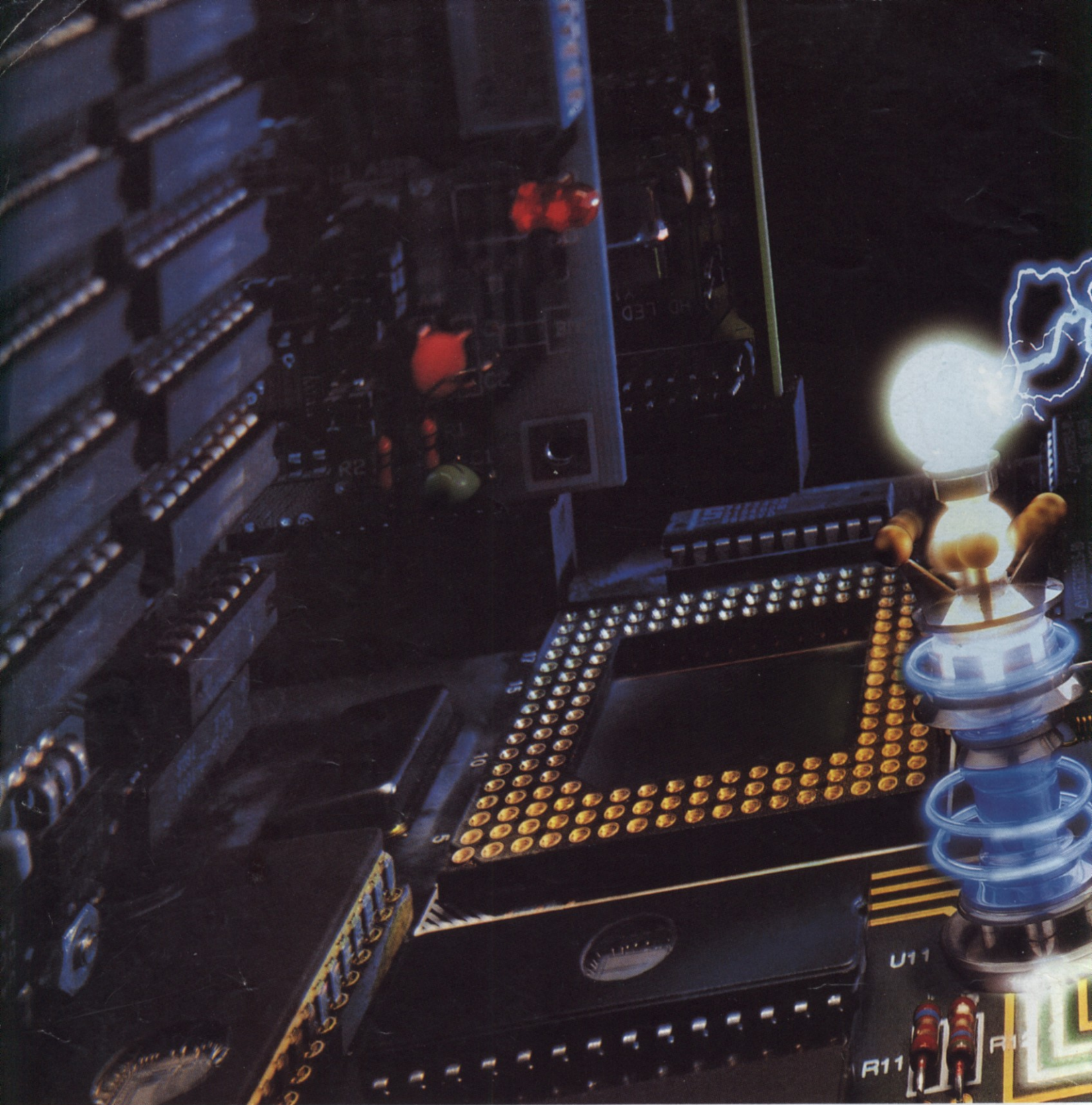
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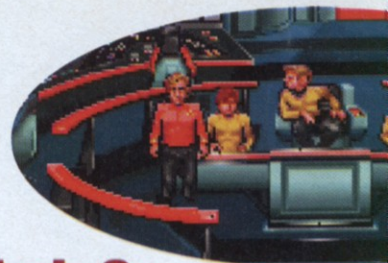
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When Two Worlds War

Check out the new spacey strategic wargame from Impressions. Page 83.



Star Trek 2: Judgement Rites

See page 110 for the low-down on the latest game in the Star Trek series.

dir.ectory

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WHILE WE ARE writing this, the great chess mind himself is making short work of Nigel.

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A HEAD-TO-HEAD between NFL Coaches Club Football and Front Page Sports Football Pro.

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JUST WHEN YOU thought it was safe to go back to the Front Line...

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CAN THE PC version of the game that kept Nintendo delinquents off the streets

56 Jack The Ripper

FROM THE MAKERS of UMS comes this interactive detective magazine set in Victorian London.

60 Sim Farm

DUNCAN MACDONALD shows you how to make a profit out of a farm with one cow.

65 Tactical Operations

STRIKE COMMANDER gets a new lease of life and a thick plot... sorry, thickened plot.

68 Dark Sun

AN EXTRAVAGANZA in glorious RPG-o-colour from SSI.

74 Privateer

A CROSS BETWEEN an Errol Flynn film, Wing Commander and a Mills & Boon novel.

83 When Two Worlds War

IMPRESSIONS PROVES that wargames needn't be dull hex-based affairs.

88 Brutal Football

BLOOD, SWEAT, tears, teeth flying - a simulation of the way we used to play football at school.



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In which Dracula meets Inca II PAGE 98



PC ZONE

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Street Fighter II

Live out your chop socky childhood superhero fantasies with the PC conversion of the Nintendo classic. Page 51.

BLUEPRINTS

110 Star Trek 2: Judgement Rites

THE MOMENT THAT Trekkies worldwide have been waiting for has finally arrived. *PC Zone* takes an exclusive early look at the sequel to Interplay's *Star Trek: 25th Anniversary*. Trek junkie Paul Presley beams aboard to relieve Captain James 'Playtex' Kirk at the bridge.

113 Rise Of The Robots

EX-BITMAP BROTHER Sean Griffiths, now heading up Mirage's in-house programming whizz kids, puts his beautifully ray-traced robots through their paces for Paul Lakin, in the futuristic beat 'em-up that threatens to... well, that just threatens really.

FEATURES

18 Alone In Lyon

LAURENCE SCOTFORD braves 24 hours in the heart of France to bring us an exclusive peek at the top-secret work of the guys and gals at Infogrames as they create *Alone In The Dark 2* and much, much more.

94 HackMasters™ Conference

DAVID McCANDLESS, Grand HackMaster™ of the order of the sacred *debug*, and keeper of the TruePlayer™ scrolls, hereby convenes the first annual world conference of Hacking and commands all true HackMasters™, past-masters and acolytes alike, to roll up one trouser leg, stuff a listing of *Ultima Underworld* down their shirts and attend to discover the true secrets of cheating at games.

103 Do The Wright Thing

DUNCAN MACDONALD is the only man in the office to have flown a real plane, so by default he has the job of getting high as a kite with a crop of the very best and worst flight simulations for the PC. Enjoyable reading for those of us who know what an aileron is, and essential reading for those of us who don't.



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THE MOST INFORMED and knowledgeable games team in the industry brings you an in-depth look at the month's news, including an exclusive first peek at the official games of the 1994 Winter Olympics.

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GET THE MOST out of your value-packed disk with our easy to follow guide to installing and playing over 2.5Mb of games and demos.

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FIND OUT WHAT goodies we've cooked up for our subscribers and Club PC members this month, and join their ranks.

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YOU DON'T NEED to win the pools to get a good software collection. Come with us as we explore the wonderful world of budget games.

98 CD-ROM Review

THE BEST CD review column in the world brings you a first look at *Dracula Unleashed* and *Inca II* and rounds up the latest releases.

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COMPLETE YOUR *PC Zone* collection or indulge in some value for money software.

138 Mr Cursor

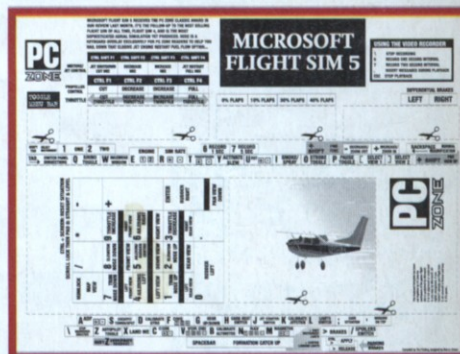
Another day in the life of the world's most inept computer nerd. Don't ya just love him?

PC

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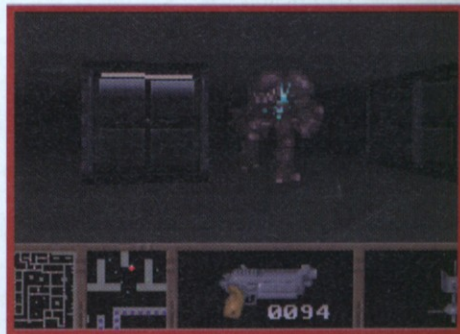
December 1993 Issue Nine

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Flight Sim 5

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Deadline

PLAYABLE BETA

Bulletin

+ More of the most up-to-date and juicy snippets of games industry gossip, obtained at great cost from the four corners of the Earth, and, of course, the truly monstrous pile of paper underneath the fax machine.

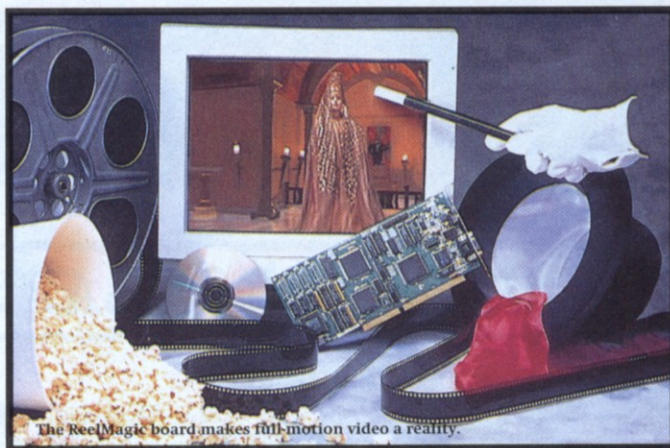
Movie magic

The term 'interactive movie' could soon stop being a misnomer. Why? Because Sigma Designs are about to launch the first affordable full-motion video and soundcard to support industry standard MPEG videos. The MPEG standard allows up to 72 minutes of sound and video to be stored on a single CD. Providing you have a 386SX or better machine with 2Mb RAM a VGA or SVGA card with a standard VESA feature connector and a CD-ROM drive, then adding the ReelMagic card will give your machine the ability to play MPEG movies and games with up to 32,768 colours at a resolution of 1024 x 768.

There are already several games in development which will utilise the ReelMagic card, including *Dragon's Lair*, which features the actual footage from the original video-disc arcade game and *Lord Of The Rings* with footage from the animated film. The card comes supplied with a specially developed MPEG version of *Return To Zork* (the normal version was blueprinted in issue eight).

MPEG movies should be available from Christmas. Top titles will be supplied on a pair of standard CDs and can be viewed directly on your PC using the ReelMagic card.

ReelMagic is available from SDL for £399. For further information telephone 081 309 5000.



The ReelMagic board makes full-motion video a reality.



So this is what Richard Branson's office looks like.

Airlines

Impression's *Air Bucks* has had a BA style monopoly for so long that this Virgin Atlantic-style challenger will have to do well to gain the number one spot. With several million dollars at your disposal, you must fight your way to the top of the international airline industry. This involves carefully managing your funds so that you can buy new equipment and open new routes, while keeping your competitors at bay. Of course, if you have access to the booking computers... well...

Price: TBA **Out:** Late November **Publisher:** Kompart (UK) Ltd

Meet PC Zone!

+ If you fancy a chance to see live reviews of the hottest games for Christmas, demo'd personally by the PC Zone team and a cast of thousands, then mosey on down to the Computer Shopper Show at Kensington Olympia some time between Thursday 2nd December and Sunday 5th December.

PC Zone will be sponsoring a major games area in the Grand Hall with special guest appearances, a hands-on chance to play the latest CD-ROM games and one to one buying and technical advice for the dedicated PC gamer. You'll also be in with a chance to win a copy of every game we're demonstrating at the show.

For those of you with cash burning a hole in your pocket, the venue will be packed with dealers stacking it high and selling it cheap, so it's a great place to shop for an upgrade or pick up a bit of discounted software.

For more information, call Blenheim on 081 742 2828 or fax them on 081 747 3856. And we'll see you there!

OPENING TIMES

Thurs 2nd Dec	10am-6pm
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Virtual reality gardening

Remember *The Lawnmower Man*? The film that got everybody excited about Virtual Reality is about to become a little less virtual and a little more real thanks to the efforts of The Sales Curve.

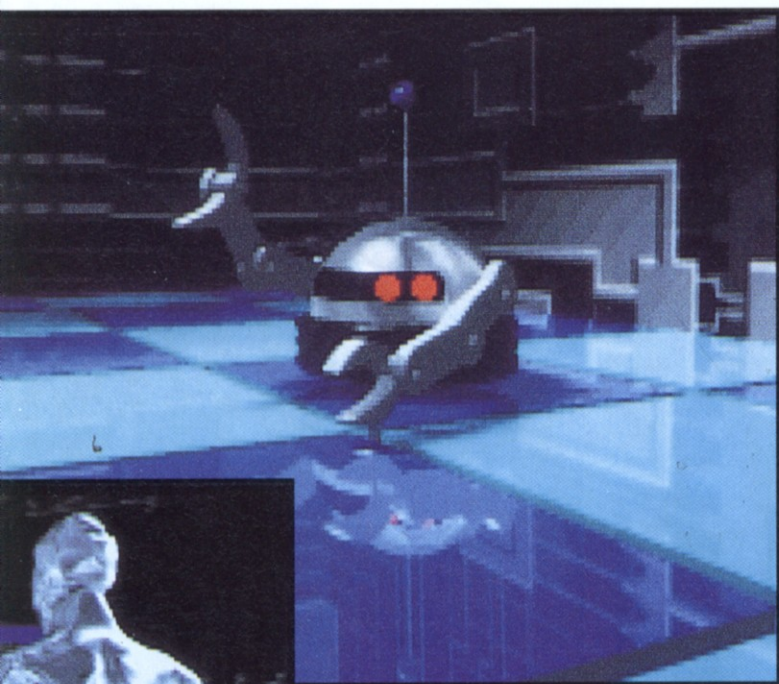
Work is already underway on the CD-ROM version of the game, which is expected to be completed before the end of the year. You take on the role of Dr Angelo who, along with Carla and Peter, has been sucked into a VR world. It is up to you to pit your intellectual powers against those of the gardener-cum-sprite Cyberjoke. Look out for a full preview and review in the next couple of issues. Meanwhile, here are some early pics to drool over.

(Above) Could it be? No, surely not a virtual Hoover ...

And this years winner of the shiny bottom competition is...

(Below) Aaargh, arrgh, hand me that virtual insecticide ...





DISPATCHES

+++ FANS OF QQPS PERFECT

General will be pleased to hear that the sequel is underway. Author Andrew Visscher tells us that he's adding high-res SVGA graphics to the VGA artwork. We've no release date or price yet, but watch this space for the first news.

+++ WE'VE JUST HAD NEWS THAT

Accolade has signed a deal with the National Football League Players Association to use the names and statistics of professional players in its forthcoming American Football game, provisionally entitled *Unnecessary Roughness*. It will sport a stunning 256 colour SVGA mode and uses rotoscoping to create a rotating 3D stadium and scaled players, allowing the player to view the game from any location with infinite camera angles. Further details in later issues.

+++ EVESHAM MICROS IS CURRENTLY

offering the Amstrad Mega PC for just £499.99 inclusive. The Mega PC combines a 1Mb 25MHz 386SX with a Sega Megadrive in a single box. It also includes a monitor complete with stereo speakers, a 40Mb hard drive and controllers suitable for PC and Megadrive games. For further information, contact Evesham Micros on (0386) 765500.

+++ KUMA'S NEW BOOK BY P. D. COKER

is called *How to Deal With Disk Disasters*. No, it's not what to do if your best mate knocks you off the high score table on your favourite game, but it will help you to avoid or recover from accidental loss of data through disk crashes, physical damage, software errors or virus attacks. The book is available from all good bookshops now for £14.95.

+++ IF YOU'RE THE SORT OF MODERN,

forward-looking astrologer that uses a PC and windows in your day to day business, rather than a full moon and the steaming entrails of an ox, then Anthony I. P. Owen in Denmark, has produced your ultimate TrueType font. The font combines 167 astrological glyphs and 62 alchemical glyphs and is available as a sans serif font, serif font and decorative font at £39.50 each. Available from Astrocalc 0442 251809, The Astrology Shop (071 497 1001), Electric Ephemeris (071 607 4133) and Laser Solutions (0737 778114).



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Bulletin

NEWS EXCLUSIVE

More Olympic Gold

US Gold has won the right to produce the official game of the 1994 Winter Olympics at Lillehammer. The PC version will include ten events: Downhill, Super G, Giant Slalom, Slalom, Freestyle Moguls, Ski Jump, four-man and two-man Bobsleigh, Luge, Biathlon and Short Track Speed Skating. These can be played individually in practice mode, in a mini-Olympics quick game or all ten events in the full Olympics, by up to four players.

The team of designers have spent many hours at the Olympic site in Lillehammer, making sure that the tracks and scenery are as close to the real thing as possible.

Additionally, having the official license to the games has allowed US Gold to incorporate the official Olympic emblems and the two mascots, Kristin and Hakon, a boy and girl in traditional Norwegian dress.

The game will also include animated sequences depicting the actual opening and closing ceremonies planned for the 1994 games.

In addition to the disk-based game there will also be a CD version which includes encyclopaedic background material on Norway, Lillehammer, and the Winter Olympics past and present. This combines text, static pictures, sound and movie footage to convey the progression of the events from the beginnings of the games to the present day.

Both games are expected to be released before Christmas at prices to be announced. Look out for a full review in the next issue.



DISPATCHES

+++ **AZTECH SYSTEMS**, THE makers of the Sound Galaxy series of budget Sound Blaster clones, have announced a MPC Level II Multimedia Upgrade Kit. The kit comprises the Sound Blaster Pro compatible Sound Galaxy Pro 16L stereo CD quality sound card, which can later be upgraded to support wavetable synthesis, the LMSI CM206 double speed CD-ROM drive, which is Photo CD compatible, five CD titles, 16 multimedia and business audio programs, a microphone and a pair of powered, amplified speakers. Look out for more details on this in later issues.

+++ **CAPSTONE HAS A CROP** of new releases lined up for the pre-Christmas buying bonanza. *Discoveries Of The Deep* is a game-cum-contest in which a genuine relic from a sunken Spanish galleon is up for grabs. From aboard your scientific vessel you must complete a number of tasks including finding the missing Flight 19 in the Bermuda triangle, cleaning up nuclear waste and finding and photographing the Titanic. In a completely different vein, *Honey D. Clown* is a bizarre action adventure based on the exploits of the character from the US TV series *In Living Color*, in which you make your way to an audition while smashing everybody from policemen to taxi drivers over the head with a sock full of sand. Finally, and essential for all you beach dudes out there, is *Surf Ninjas*, based on the 'hilarious New Line Cinema movie' in which Johnny McQuinn surfs and karate chops his way to the throne of Patu-San. For availability and prices, check with your local retailer or call 010 1 800 468 7226 (US number).

His master's videogame?

Could it be a case of mistaken identity (on the dog's part).

HMV HAS RECENTLY opened its new games department: Level One on the first floor of its Oxford Street megastore. The 6000 square feet area is approached via a light tunnel which opens into a futuristic retail area complete with surround sound and mood-altering lights. Like, wow man. The store also includes a challenge area in which up to eight players can play simultaneously. Level One intends to hold around 200 challenges every year. The challenge area will also be used for demonstrations tests and previews.



RPG for two, and two for RPG

+ Tabletop RPG fanatics who can't bear the thought of adventuring without a chum in tow will be relieved to learn that there is at long last a game made especially for them. QQP's *The Red Crystal: The Seven Secrets Of Life* is unique among RPGs in that, not only does it allows like-minded gamers to play with each other via modem or null modem, but allows two players to compete or collaborate on the same machine.

However, if the idea of journeying through hostile countryside and 50-plus taxing dungeon levels, encountering a host of evil and friendly races, venturing into villages and castles and finding the seven secrets of life appeals to you but you have no friends, fear not. *The Red Crystal* has a single player mode too.

Price: £44.99 **Out:** Now **Publisher:** Mirage 0260 299909

You'll never walk alone in *The Red Crystal* from QQP and Mirage.





CHARTS
COMPILED BY GALLUP
SPONSORED BY PENGUIN BISCUITS



GALLUP CHARTS

This month PC Zone brings you the latest games charts, courtesy of Gallup. We have the top 20 full price titles, the top ten budget titles and the top ten CD-ROM titles. So you have the choice: keep with the herd or go it alone and bollocks to the lot of them.

TOP 20 FULL PRICE TITLES.

1. Flight Sim 5.0	Microsoft	£39.99
2. Privateer	Electronic Arts	£49.99
3. Zool	Gremlin	£34.99
4. X-Wing	US Gold	£45.99
5. Links - Belfry	US Gold	£22.99
6. Street Fighter 2	US Gold	£29.99
7. Day Of The Tentacle	US Gold	£42.99
8. Links 386 Pro	US Gold	£45.99
9. Privateer Speech Pack	Electronic Arts	£19.99
10. Sensible Soccer	Renegade /Mindscape	£32.99
11. Imperial Pursuit	US Gold	£19.99
12. Championship Manager 93	Domark	£29.99
13. Syndicate	Electronic Arts	£44.99
14. Railroad Deluxe	MicroProse	£39.99
15. Kasparov's Gambit	Electronic Arts	£44.99
16. Premier Manager	Gremlin	£29.99
17. Fields Of Glory	MicroProse	£44.99
18. Civilization	MicroProse	£39.99
19. Formula One Grand Prix	MicroProse	£44.99
20. Strike Commander	Electronic Arts	£49.99

TOP TEN BUDGET TITLES

1. Populous & Promised Lands	Hit Squad	£14.99
2. Fun School 2 (6-8 years)	Hit Squad	£9.99
3. Super Space Invaders	Hit Squad	£9.99
4. Fun School 2 (under 6)	Hit Squad	£9.99
5. Magic Land Dizzy	Code Masters	£9.99
6. Fantasy World Dizzy	Code Masters	£9.99
7. Pirates	Kixx	£12.99
8. Prince Of Persia	Hit Squad	£12.99
9. Lombard RAC Rally	Hit Squad	£9.99
10. Hero Quest	GBH	£11.99

TOP TEN CD-ROM TITLES

1. Day Of The Tentacle	US Gold	£45.99
2. The 7th Guest	Virgin	£69.99
3. Dune	Virgin	£45.99
4. Kings Quest 5	Sierra On-Line	£49.99
5. Great Naval Battles	US Gold	£44.99
6. Indiana Jones - Fate Of Atlantis	US Gold	£45.99
7. Sherlock Holmes 3	Mindscape	£49.99
8. Chessmaster 3000	Mindscape	£44.99
9. Sherlock Holmes	Mindscape	£39.99
10. Eric The Unready	Accolade	£34.99



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PRIVATEER	30.99
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PROTOSTAR	24.99
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RETURN TO ZORK	29.99
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Anime article in issue seven and wish to get more involved in the Anime and Manga scene, then you might want to consider joining Anime Kyo UK. For £7.00 per annum the club offers regular screenings of Anime films, synopses of Anime films, a membership card entitling the holder to TEN percent discount at certain shops, a film trading service, a film rental service, regular club meetings and social events, and a club magazine. For further information, write to Anime Kyo UK, c/o Carlo Bernhardt, 4 St Peter's Street, Syston, Leicestershire, LE7 1HJ.

+++ MALLARD SOFTWARE,

renowned for its flight sim add-ons, has already created a scenery upgrade for *Flight Sim 5*, which promises to look even more realistic than the scenery in the basic game. The San Francisco scenery disk combines ray-traced images from actual satellite photographs with high resolution 'cybergraphics'. Mallard also has plans to release scenery disks for Washington D.C., Los Angeles, Seattle, and San Diego as well as upgrades to its *Aircraft And Adventure Factory*, *Flight Planner*, and *Pilot's Power Tools*. San Francisco: *Flight Sim 5 Scenery Upgrade* will be in the shops soon at a price to be announced.

+++ FLIGHT ENTHUSIASTS

with higher aims should look out for *Space Clipper*, Mallard's forthcoming simulation and adventure game. The game is based on the *Delta Clipper*, a new space shuttle currently being developed by McDonnell Douglas. The new shuttle is being designed with ordinary commercial flights in mind. The game is to be developed in conjunction with McDonnell Douglas consultant Steve Hoer and science fiction author Aleta Jackson.

+++ ORCHID HAS

announced a double-speed CD-ROM drive which, unlike most internal CD-ROM drives, is equipped with front panel controls to allow the easy playing of audio disks. The drive transferring data at an impressive 300 Kb/second, is out now for £299 including cables and an interface card. For further details, call 0256 479898.

Airport '93



If train sets don't turn you on, then maybe the latest simulation from Mallard Software will. *Tower* is an air traffic control simulation based on *Tower Pro*, a professional tool used to train real air traffic controllers. It gives you the opportunity to do the job of the air traffic controller in the tower at a busy international airport, from where you will attempt to keep both incoming and outgoing traffic coming and going safely and smoothly. *Tower's* major selling point is its superb graphics featuring actual views from the towers of most of the world's major airports.

Tower will be available soon from RC Simulations 0272 550900.



How Little House On The Prairie will look in the year 3000
Post Holocaust Italy: Not a cornetto to be had anywhere!

Survival

World War Three has been over for 164 years. A group of 200 people, who had been living in an air-raid shelter are forced out into the open when their life-support system fails. You must manage their survival in the post-holocaust world by constructing buildings and vehicles, setting up defence systems and handling emergencies. The game can be played in either a European or North American setting.

Price: tba Out: Late November
Publisher: Kompart (UK) Ltd

Can you get more planes on the runway at once than a Spanish Air Traffic Controller? Maybe, with the help of Mallard Software's *Tower*.



The Lords Of Power is the first value for money compilation to be released by Ubi Soft in the coming month.



BAT packs

Ubi Soft hasn't produced any original PC games for a while, but it has been busy putting together some superb compilations. *Lords Of Power* (£39.99) will include *Silent Service II*, *Red Baron*, *Railroad Tycoon*, and *The Perfect General*. Also imminent is the CD compilation, *Golden Seven* (£49.99), containing *Red Baron*, *Leisure Suit Larry 5*, *Heart Of China*, *King's Quest 5*, *Shanghai 2*, *Sargon 5* and *Great Courts 2*.

By the end of November you will be able to buy *Battles Of Time* on CD (£29.99), containing *The Perfect General*, *First Samurai*, and *Mega-Lo-Mania*. *First Samurai*, *Fighter Bomber* and *Great Courts 2* will all be available for £9.99.

VERSION WATCH

Keeping an eye on the latest free bug fixes and upgrades

Quite a few bug fixes have become available over the last couple of months, and they're listed below, though none of them are earth-shattering upgrades. Probably the most important is the latest fix for *Lands Of Lore*, version 1.11a, which is described by Westwood Studios as fixing 'a number of minor bugs'.

Owners of any of the *V For Victory* series of games will be pleased to hear that there is a patch available which upgrades the first three games of the series to version 3.1 status: *Utah Beach*, *Velikiye Luki* and *Market Garden*. There is also a lengthy text file floating about explaining the benefits of the 3.1 upgrade.

The *Strike Commander* Tactical Operations 1

upgrade corrects the irritating save game problem. Basically, if you installed T01 over your existing *Strike Commander*, the old save game format was incompatible with the new one, so you effectively lost your save games. This fix converts your old save games to the new T01 format and saves you from pulling your hair out.

Finally, there have been a number letters from people who have contacted software houses for these fixes, only to be told they don't exist. Well, sorry everyone, they do exist: they're in the official file lists of the software publishers on CompuServe. If anyone has any trouble convincing a publisher of this, then drop us a line and we'll try to help.

COMPANY	GAME	LATEST VERSION	MONTH OF RELEASE	DESCRIPTION
Dynamix	Take A Break Pinball	?	Aug-93	General fix
Sierra	King's Quest 6 CD	?	Jul-93	Windows fix
Origin	Strike Commander Tactical Operations 1	?	Oct-93	Save game compatibility fix
Three-Sixty	V For Victory	3.1	Aug-93	General fix for first 3 in series
QQP	WW2: Battles Of The Pacific	?	Sep-93	General fix
White Wolf	Empire Deluxe/Windows	?	Sep-93	Network fix
White Wolf	Empire Deluxe/DOS	3.11	Sep-93	General fix
SSG	CAW Construction Kit 2.02		Aug-93	General fix
MicroProse	Return Of The Phantom CD	?	Sep-93	Speech fix
Interplay	Omar Sharif Bridge	?	Sep-93	General fix
Omnitrend	Breach 2	2.3	Sep-93	General fix
Omnitrend	Rules Of Engagement 2	1.06	Sep 93	Animation lock-up fix
Omnitrend	Rules Of Engagement 2 Campaign Disk	1.01	Aug-93	IGS fix
Westwood/Virgin	Lands Of Lore	1.11a	Aug-93	General fix
Access	Links 386 Pro	1.11	Sep-93	General fix
Origin	Serpent Isle	?	Sep-93	DR-DOS fix

YOU ASKED FOR IT!

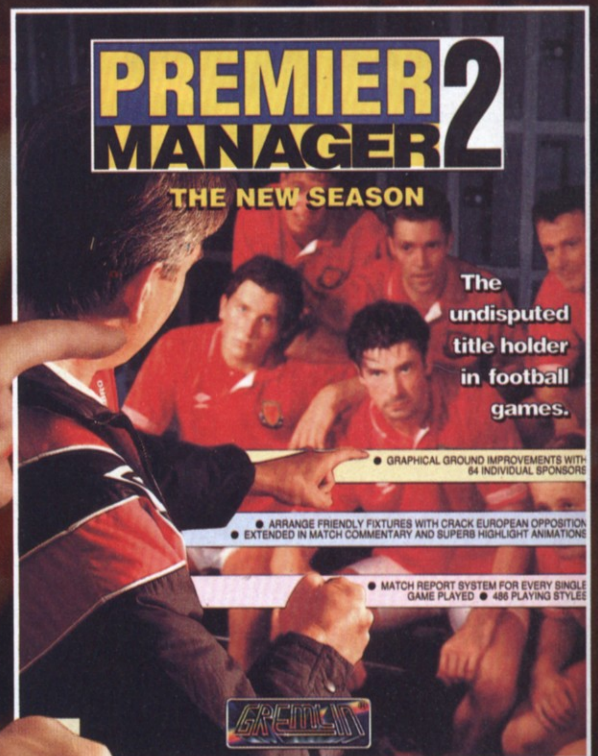
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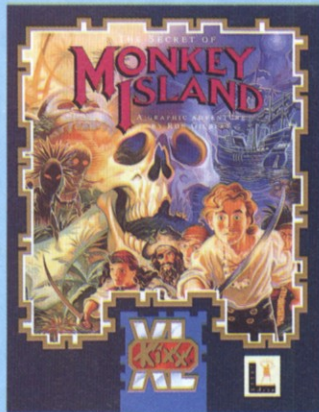
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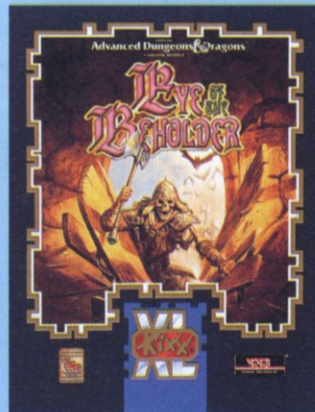
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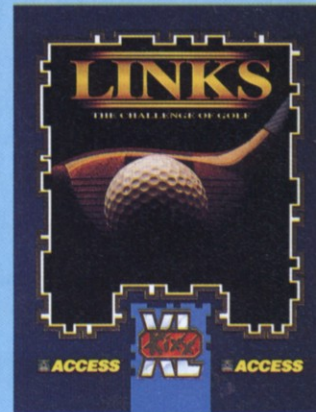
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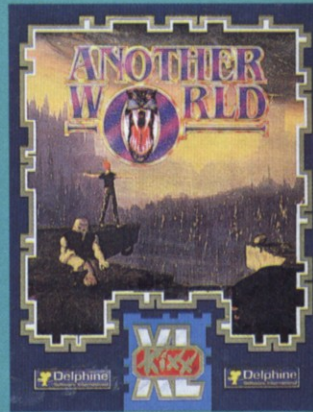
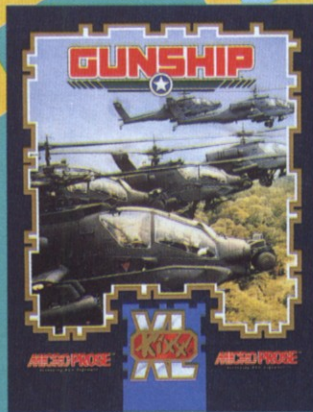
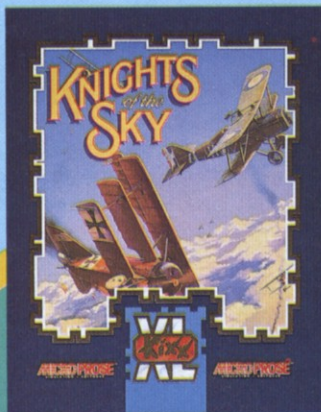
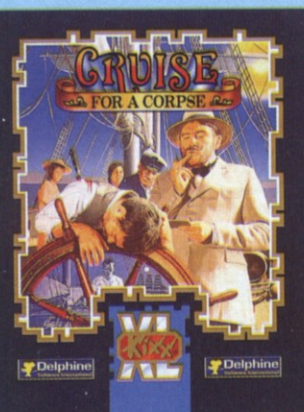
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COVER DISKS

Not one, not two, not three even, but six, yes, six superb games and demos have been forcibly squeezed onto this month's cover disk, giving you over 2.5Mb from one high density disk. How do we do it and still manage to charge you less than other inferior mags? Well, we're nice like that.

How to install your cover disk

So that we can pack as much as possible onto each disk, all of the games and demos are compressed. Before you can run them, you will need to install them on your hard drive. To install the games, place your cover disk into a 3.5" disk drive and make that drive current by typing:

A:
or whatever drive letter is appropriate.
Now start the installation program by typing:
DISKZONE

The installation program will display a list of the programs on the disk. Use the cursor keys to highlight the program you wish to install and then press RETURN. The installation program will then suggest a drive and directory in which the program is to be installed. If you are happy with the suggested location, then simply press RETURN. If you want the program to be installed on an alternative drive or directory, backspace over the default location and enter an alternative, then press RETURN.

You should now see the files being listed as they are installed on your hard drive. Once the program has been successfully installed, you will be returned to the program list, where you may select another program to install, or press ESC to exit to DOS.

GAME 1

Deadline

When we saw the beta version of this hot new *Wolfenstein*-style game, we knew you'd want to see it too. So we decided to include this 'work in progress version' to give you an idea of what to expect from the finished game. Sorry there's no sound in this version, but we think you'll enjoy it nonetheless.

To start the game type:

DEADLINE

From the initial menu, you should press F3 for full instructions, and then F1 to start the game.

To play this game you will need a fast PC with an MCGA, VGA or SVGA card.

GAME 2

Spectre

This month we are giving you a unique opportunity to get a new American game published in Britain. *Spectre* is a futuristic tank game, similar in concept to Atari's *Battlezone*, in which tanks battle it out on a surreal landscape. The game, by Velocity, the creators of *Jetfighter*, has been available for the Macintosh for some time, and has proved popular because it allows two or more machines to be linked together allowing several players to take each other on. This demo enables you to sample three levels from the one player game. If, having played it, you think you might enjoy the full game, please write a letter to us Gold, Units 2/3, Holford Business Park, Holford, Birmingham, B6 7AX and let them know that you are a potential buyer.

For full instructions you should type:

TYPE MANUAL.TXT | MORE

To start the demo type:

SPECTRE

To play this demo you will need a fast 286 or better with an MCGA, VGA or SVGA card.

GAME 3

Monster Bash Lite

Apogee's brilliant new platform game is so huge that we couldn't possibly squeeze it onto this disk. However, we didn't want you to miss out on it completely, so we've included this special fat-free version with three great levels to try out.

To play the game type:

BASHLITE

You should first select 'Instructions' from the main menu to learn how to play the game, then select 'Begin Game'.

To play *Monster Bash Lite*, you will need a fast machine with an EGA, VGA, SVGA or SVGA card. Please note that music will play through Sound Blaster compatible soundcards, but you will require at least 200Kb of free EMS memory for this.

GAME 4

Cyrus Chess

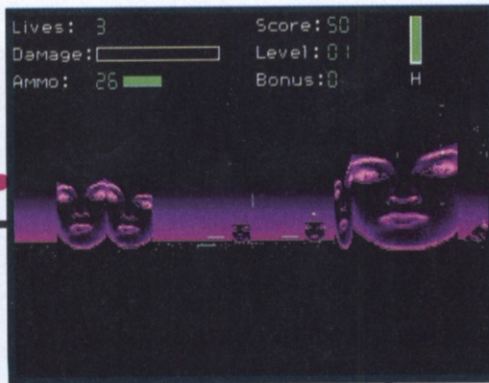
Cyrus Chess was written in 1983 by Richard Lang, who also created *Chess Genius*, *Mephisto Amsterdam*, *Dallas*, *Roma*, *Almeria*, and *Vancouver* and was originally published by Kevin O'Connel



(Above left) Meet nice creatures of the night and turn them into dogmeat in *Deadline*.

(Above centre) *Spectre*: Play it and get it published over here.

(Above right) *Monster Bash Lite*: gaming for slimmers.



and David Levy's company, Intelligent Software. We are very pleased to be able to bring you the entire game, which, despite its age, has superb graphics and a very reasonable playing strength.

To play *Cyrus Chess*, you should type:

CYRUS

Pressing F1 at any time will call up a screen detailing the keys required for play.

To play *Cyrus Chess* you will need a machine with an EGA, MCGA, VGA, or SVGA card.



(Above left) *Cyrus Chess*: Can beat Nigel Short. (Not Really!)

(Above right) *Squarez* - One or two player puzzle action which is better than Tetris (honest).

GAME 5

Squarez

Why have we included this puzzle game? Because, quite simply, it is even better than *Tetris*. Yes, we know that's a tall claim, but play it and you'll see what we mean. In one player mode it's good, but play it with a friend and you'll definitely be hooked.

For full instructions type:

TYPE MANUAL.DOC | MORE

To play *Squarez* type:

SQUAREZ

To play *Squarez*, you will need a fast machine with an MCGA, VGA or SVGA card.

GAME 6

Trio

To round the disk off nicely we've given Windows addicts something to play with. This puzzle game is simple to play, but requires some serious grey matter to master.

To play *Trio*, you should start Windows and then run TRIO.EXE, or set *Trio* up as an application and then double-click on its icon. For full instructions, start the game and then select the help menu.

To play *Trio* you will need Windows 3.1 and the file VBRUN200.DLL. This file is available from certain bulletin boards and on-line information systems or direct from Microsoft (0734 270000.)

IMPORTANT

PC Zone makes every effort to ensure that its disks and the programs contained on them are fault free, virus free and work as advertised. However, PC Zone and its suppliers and distributors can accept no liability for loss or damage to software or hardware however caused. The cover disk supplied with this issue is used at the discretion and risk of individual readers. Use of the cover disk implies acceptance of these terms.

Some of the programs included on this disk are shareware. They are supplied as an evaluation service for our readers. If you like these games and intend to go on using them you should register the games, in return for which you will usually receive updated or additional games and other bonuses.

HELP!

If your cover disk won't load, or doesn't operate as expected, you can call Abi Tobun between 10am and 6pm every Tuesday on 071 372 6666.

If your cover disk still won't operate, please place it in a padded envelope with a large self-addressed envelope and return it to PC Zone Disk Returns, Reflex Magnetics, Unit 1, 31-33 Priory Park Road, Kilburn, London, NW6 7UP. Please do not send disks back to PC Zone or Dennis Publishing as we will be unable to help you. Please allow 28 days for delivery of a replacement disk.

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magazines, *PC Zone's* new, in depth reviews section includes comments from selected Club members on the month's top release. So now readers of *PC Zone* don't just have to take our opinion for granted, they have yours too.

In addition to the regular readers' verdicts, we will be running regular Classic Game features, looking back at products that have been on sale for a while but which have stood the test of time. Our research for these features will be drawn from your opinions and we'll be conducting regular polls to find out what you think.

Finally, Club PC members who live near leading software houses may well find themselves invited to visit their premises, be given sneak previews and give their personal verdicts on top secret games projects under development.

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THIS MONTH'S PANEL

Turn to page 74 and find out what Martin Connelly, Jonathan McCracken and Bob Jilley had to say about *Privateer*.

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Alone In Lyon

Infogrames, the French software giant, became something of a household name this year, astounding games players with titles like *Alone In The Dark* and *Shadow Of The Comet*. As the company prepares for its floatation on the French stock market, Laurence Scottford reports back from Infogrames' HQ in Lyon, with news of *Alone In The Dark 2*, *Chaos Control* and more.

T

HE MERE TITLE of *Alone In The Dark 2* will probably be sufficient to entice PC gamers in their droves to buy the game. Its prequel was, without a shadow of a doubt, the most celebrated game of the last 12 months. Critics and consumers alike have hailed it for its dark and thrilling atmosphere, a unique property among 3D games. If *Alone In The Dark* has a single bad aspect, as far as Infogrames is concerned, it is simply this: it's a bloody hard act to follow. Nevertheless, script writer Hubert Chardot and

his team have risen to the challenge and, by the time you read this, the second game in the planned trilogy should be nearing completion.

Goodbye to Lovecraft

For this game, Infogrames has made no attempt at a connection with the works of H. P. Lovecraft (the Cthulu theme will be continued in *Shadow Of The Comet 2*), although the near-bankrupt private investigator Edward Carnby is once again the hero. His female counterpart, Emily Hartwood, does not appear in this game, but she is replaced by a small girl, Grace

Saunders. Rather than giving you the choice of playing one character or the other, Infogrames has integrated both of them into the same plot.

Carnby receives a request for help from his old friend Ted Striker, who has been trying to rescue Grace from the clutches of a gang of evil bootleggers led by the one-time pirate, One-Eyed Jack. These fiends are holed up in an ancient mansion that goes by the uninviting name of Hell's Kitchen.

'Fans of Alone In The Dark will not be disappointed with its sequel. If you have yet to sample Infogrames' cult 3D game then Alone In The Dark 2 will be even more of a pleasure to play.'



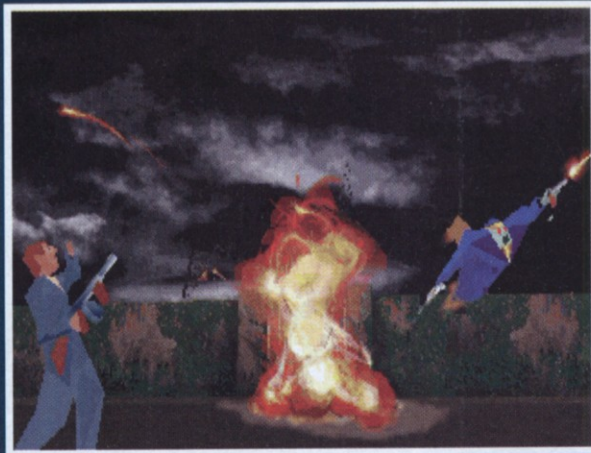
(Left) Meet Grace. She's the new heroine of *Alone In The Dark 2*. Unlike the first game, you don't initially choose whether to play Edward Carnby or Grace Saunders, you have to play both of them!

(Right) One-Eyed Jack's story is told in one of the game's two flashback sequences. In the disk-based version of the game, this sequence is shown as a series of still pictures, but in the CD version, it will probably be a fully animated sequence.

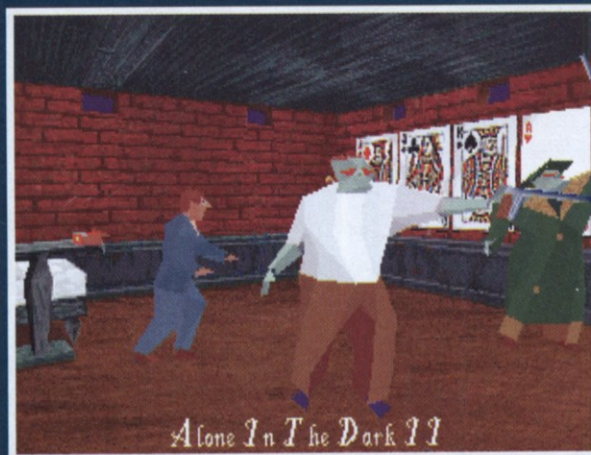


(Left) Grace encounters the evil witch, Elizabeth Jarret. Unfortunately, any sense of menace will probably be completely lost on you because you'll be going all gooey eyed and sloppy over the little heroine - yes, she is made that unbearably cute.

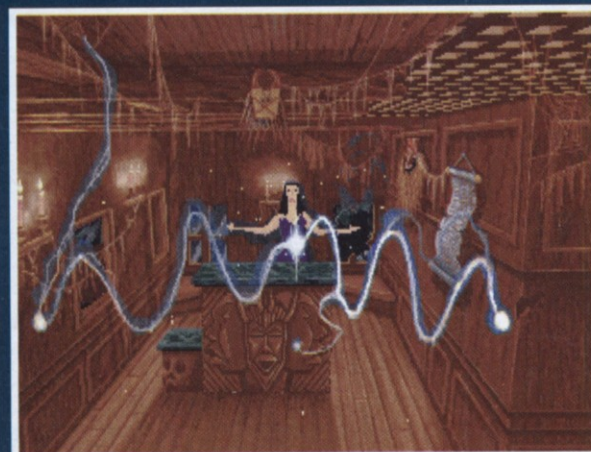
(Right) One noticeable addition to the graphics engine is the ability to overlay the 3D action with two-dimensional animation. As this picture clearly shows, the effects can be stunning.



(Left) One of the most atmospheric effects in the first *Alone In The Dark* game is the use of strange 'camera angles'. These are no less evident in *Alone 2*, as in this scene in which our Edward takes a precarious walk around a mast. (Right) You'll find that playing cards crop up quite frequently in *Alone In The Dark 2*. No, it's not some obscure reference to *Alice In Wonderland*, it's just that One-Eyed Jack is not only partial to a bit of bootlegging, but also to a spot of gambling.



(Left) The new look Edward Carnby. In addition to his beefed-up appearance, he now has more actions - as well as boxing and kicking, he can head-butt his assailants and he now walks down stairs rather than sliding down them. Unfortunately he also has three different ways of dying. (Right) One of the more impressive scenes from *Alone In The Dark 2*. In total the game has approximately 250 backgrounds and 300 objects.



Carnby arrives at the mansion to discover that Striker is dead and Grace is still incarcerated somewhere within. So begins the first half of the game in which the intrepid Carnby sets out to complete the task that Striker failed to finish. Alas, the course of events takes a rather unfortunate turn and Carnby is himself captured, but not before he has discovered that the pirates are all hundreds of years old - immortalised after a pact with an evil witch, Elizabeth Jarret. They intend Grace to be the latest of the regular sacrifices that are demanded of them in return for their longevity.

It is at this point that the player takes control of Grace, and she, in a somewhat unexpected reversal of roles must now rescue Carnby.

Kid's Stuff

The most striking difference between the two games is that, whereas the setting of *Alone 1* was dark and claustrophobic, *Alone 2* is larger, less intense and a lot more humorous with more involved puzzles. It seems that Infogrames is aiming for more of a family appeal with this game. This feeling was reinforced when I witnessed the animation of Grace, which has been made almost unbearably cute.

The humour comes largely from the characterisations of the bootlegging pirates. Each of them has very individual personalities and, unlike the monsters in *Alone In The Dark*, they act intelligently. They even die in different ways!

Even the dignified Carnby is not immune to a bit of slapstick. Just try drinking the whisky in the game and watch what happens...

Polygon? Poor, dear poly...

It isn't only the plot of *Alone In The Dark 2* that's seen a substantial change of approach. The programmers, too, have been hard at work tweaking the graphics engine, and it has certainly paid off. The animation now runs at three times the speed achieved in the first game. The development team has made full use of this extra speed to make the objects more detailed. This particular effect is most noticeable in the close-ups of faces, which are more expressive and less abstract than before, and in the number of creatures on screen simultaneously. This number can amount to as many as seven in some scenes.

Unusually for a 3D game, 2D animations have been added to enhance the game's visual appeal, so you will see, for example, shrapnel flying when guns are fired. 2D images are also used in a number of cut scenes, particularly two flashback sequences which are used to fill the player in on the background to the story. In the disk version of the game, these are presented as a series of still shots, but there are plans afoot to extend them to a fully animated sequence for the CD-ROM version.

And speaking of CDs

On the basis of what I've seen, I can assure fans of *Alone In The Dark* that they will not be disappointed with its sequel. If you have yet to sample Infogrames' cult 3D game then *Alone In The Dark 2* will be even more of a pleasure to play. CD owners might want to hang tight for the CD version of the game, however, which will follow the same plot but include extra animations and action sequences.

Finally, if my earlier mention of a trilogy has intrigued you, then let me put you out of your misery. We can exclusively confirm that, yes, there will be a third *Alone In The Dark* game, and, yes, it will involve a substantial rewrite of the 3D engine. Hubert and his team are keeping fairly tight-lipped about the theme of the game, but he did reveal to us that it will probably be set in a Wild West ghost town. We can't wait!

Chaos from order

If you were to mention *Chaos Control* to employees of Infogrames you might very well invoke nothing more than a puzzled look. The game has been known as *Liberty*, *Alien Chaos*, and *First Contact* (amongst others) at various stages of its development. But however vague Infogrames might be about the name, it is certain about one thing: that it intends this to be the most impressive and sophisticated shoot 'em-up ever created for PC CD-ROM.

It is 2070. The pioneer probe launched in the 1970's has been drifting through the universe for many years, before it is finally found and interpreted by hostile alien creatures called the Keshrhan. These creatures travel to the Solar system, and attack the human mining colonies on Mars and Jupiter. First Lieutenant Liberty Darkhill is the last space navy officer to return to the Moonbase from the battle zone. It is up to her to lead Earth's forces in a final desperate response to rid mankind of the alien scourge.

Five stage plan

The liberation of the Solar system is undertaken in five stages:

1. You must fight your way into the command bunker buried beneath the Empire State building in Manhattan.
2. The ETS have introduced a deadly virus into the computer system. You log into the system via a neural jack and hunt and destroy the diabolical data.
3. It's off to the orbital station where, once again, you must battle to take control.
4. You fly over the surface of the huge alien mothership in an attempt to breach its defences.
5. Then the mother of all battles with the mother of all aliens.

For the love of Allen and Anime

Designer Frank Drevon, admits that the two major influences in his work are Japanese Manga and Anime and the creations of the artist H. R. Giger, who become a household name after designing the 'look' of the film *Alien*.

The Giger influence is most prominent in the design of the alien creatures and their technology, which is a disturbing mix of biological and mechanical components.

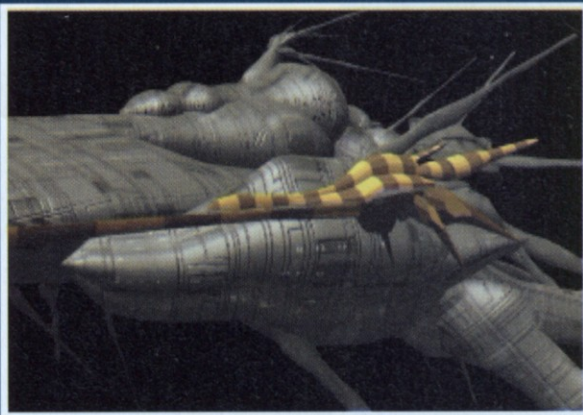
As to the Anime connection, one look at the characters will have Japanese comic book fans feeling at home. To make the artwork more fluid and less computer-like, all the main characters are drawn on paper then scanned in and coloured on the machine. The designers then use a technique similar to the cell animation pioneered by Walt Disney to animate the characters over a fixed background.

Ray-tracing tools

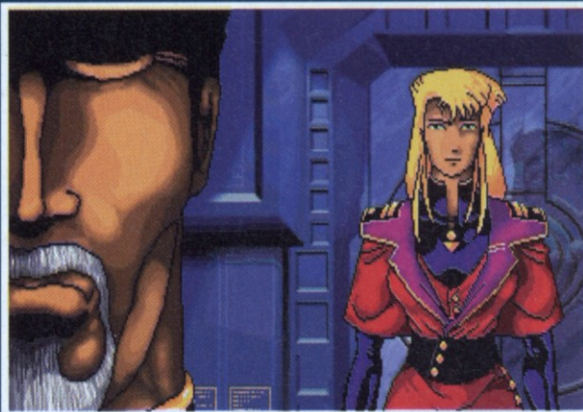
It is the graphical quality of the in-game sequences that make *Chaos Control* a jaw-dropping experience. The graphics for these parts of the game have been created using sophisticated ray-tracing techniques on a powerful Silicon Graphics workstation.

The procedure used to create the images is so complex that it takes between ten and 30 minutes to produce a single frame, and to turn out just 25 minutes of animation takes 6500 hours of continuous processing time.

Chaos Control has evidently been a labour of love for Frank Drevon. With over two million polygons making up the action sequences alone, this could be the CD product of 1994. **Z**



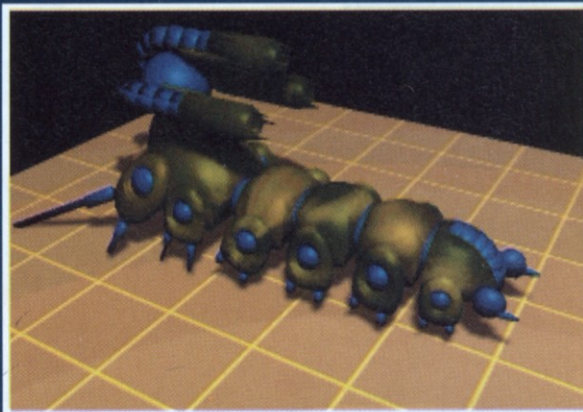
A section of the enormous mother ship in *Chaos Control*. Part of the game involves flying over its huge surface.



The influence of Japanese Anime art is very apparent in the look of *Chaos Control*'s main characters.



This spaceport scene is comprised of an incredible 75,000 polygons. You could render this on your 386 PC - provided you had three weeks to spare!



Game designer Frank Drevon is also a fan of Giger, and many of Drevon's creations, like Giger's, are weird combinations of biology and technology.



THE RETURN OF CTHULU

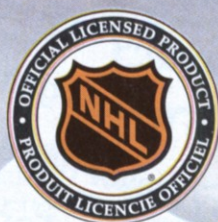
This man is Edouard Viollet, and until I interrupted him he was hard at work on a brand new mouse-driven interface which will form the heart of *Shadow Of The Comet 2*, the second official Cthulu game based on the works of the celebrated horror writer H. P. Lovecraft. Like the first game, this will also feature the journalist and astronomer John Parker. Provisionally entitled *Prisoner Of Ice*, it is to be set largely in Antarctica and the plot is based loosely on one of Lovecraft's best stories, *The Mountains Of Madness*. The brand-new interface will also incorporate scrolling, multi-screen locations and sprite scaling, so the size of characters will change as they move into and out of the scene.



Made up from multiple screenshots.



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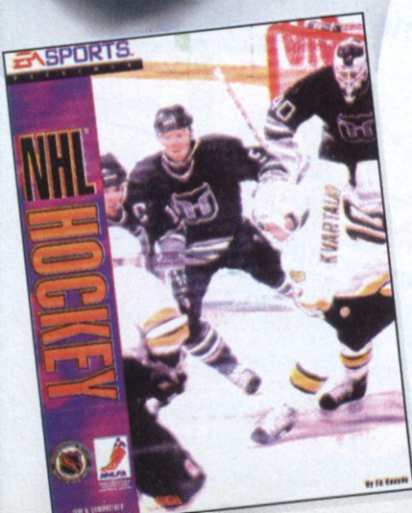
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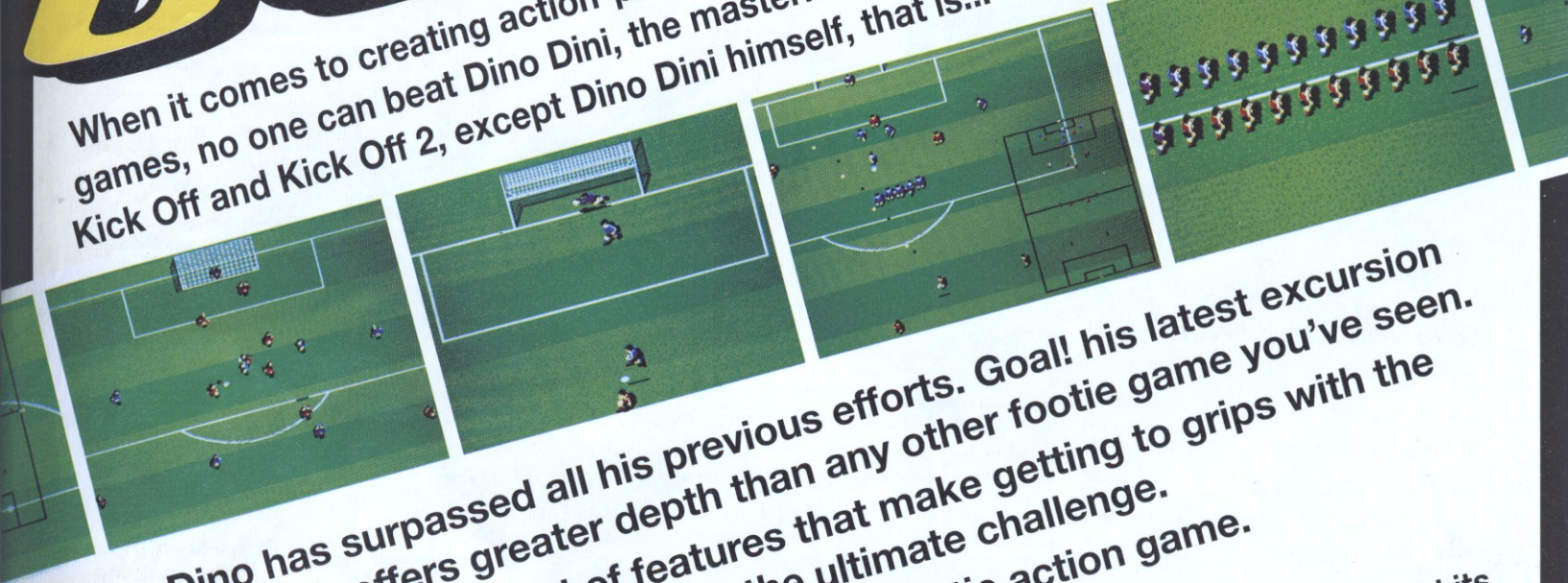
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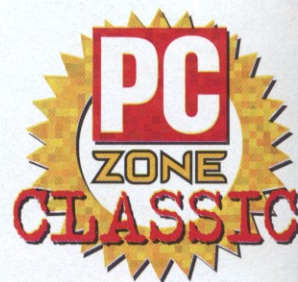


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PC ZONE



reviews

Games reviews is what PC Zone is all about and this is where the reviews start. On the next 50 pages you'll find reviews of all the latest software. However, before you launch yourself into the most authoritative reviews pages around you might like to check up on what it all means.

PC ZONE score

A game of truly
monumental
averageness

50

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THE SCORE

All games receive an overall mark out of 100. So by definition that's a percentage but if you want to call it 'Out of a hundred' then you go ahead and call it 'Out of a hundred'. You can even call it 'Ernest' if you like.

As a rough guide to interpreting the scores here's the guidelines we give to reviewers. (Not that they ever read them mind you. It can be quite heartbreaking at times...)

90+ (PC Zone Classic)

Highly original idea or an exceptional, near 'definitive' version of an old idea. Flawless in all departments and crammed to overflowing with long-term playability. Alternatively the software company took the reviewer to Paris for the weekend.

80-89 (PC Zone Recommended)

Extremely well executed strong in all/all but one department. High degree of originality.

70-79 Strong idea, well executed. Not necessarily very original. However, weaknesses do not seriously impair playability, and it has a reasonably long life.

60-69 Games falling into the 'If you like this style of game you'll like this if not you won't' category. Plus games strong on idea but weak on presentation or vice versa.

50-59 Seen it all before, take it or leave it. Nothing special to recommend it but not abysmal either.

40-49 Dodgy. Still playable but probably only the once.

30-39 Seriously weak in idea and execution.

20-29 The game is hopeless or the software company forgot the £50 cash bribe.

10-19 Bin jobs

0-9 It didn't work. It crashed the PC and got jammed in the disk drive.

THE SPECS

Is there anything worse than buying a game only to find it's not compatible with your machine? Well yes, coming home and finding your cat on fire for instance, but we can't do anything about that. With this technical box we can at least make sure you know what memory, graphic and sound support you will need (or can use) with each game.

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 565K

Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 20MHz

Installation: Essential

Controls: Mouse, Keyboard

WHAT'S ON OUR HARD DISK?

Some games get installed, reviewed and then deleted. Others hang around a lot longer. This (in no particular order) is what's currently nestling on our hard drive. Not necessarily the best games around, but the ones we keep coming back to.

- 1 Flight Sim 5.0
- 2 Stronghold
- 3 Arcade For Windows
- 4 Chessmaster 3000
- 5 Rules Of Engagement



IN PERSPECTIVE

Often all that a review is saying is that a game is as good as that one but not quite as good as the other one. In Perspective attempts to illustrate this visually by rating the game in terms of similar examples. The 'scores' given in this graph are relative to each other i.e. all examples might score highly in their own right but not against each other.

IN PERSPECTIVE

A Better Game

The Game Being Reviewed

A Worse Game



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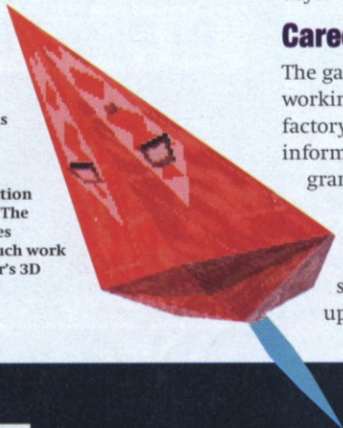




Five years in the making, *Elite II* has arrived.

Mark Burgess takes his Cobra for a spin.

(Above left) Heading into outer space, you'll find that the cockpit layout is similar, but the visuals are infinitely more splendid. (Above right) Back planetside, and the action is already hotting up. The complexity of the cities demonstrates how much work has gone into Frontier's 3D graphics engine.



THE FIRST QUESTION about *Elite II* is: is it worth the wait. I can answer that now. Yes, go and buy it. The game is a wonder to behold. Smooth texture mapped graphics, point light sources and smooth scrolling. If you're familiar with modern programs then you are forgiven for expecting the whole thing to come on 12 HD disks and need a 486DX. In fact, it can run on a 386 and takes up just 1.5Mb of hard disk space. You can even play it from the floppy. Here's a man who has not forgotten the old days.

Career opportunities

The game starts with you working in a fish processing factory. A solicitor's letter informs you that your grandfather, Commander Jameson (yes, *that one*) has died. As he has spread the seed of his loins freely about the galaxy, there is not a great deal to go round. He has left you a spaceship and – wait please – 100 credits. It's up to you to make your own way in the worlds

now. The ship is an Eagle; moderately fast and capable of carrying a small amount of cargo.

Traditionalists can elect to begin on Lave with a Cobra lacking autopilot and other goodies.

The galaxy is split up between the Federation, sort of us/EC good guys, the Empire which are an

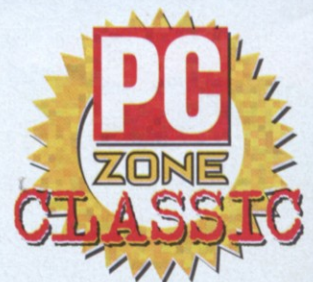
unpleasant mix of Romans and Nazis (if you've ever bought a cup of coffee in Rome you'll know how nasty *that* must be) and the Independent planets (strong on dull headlines).

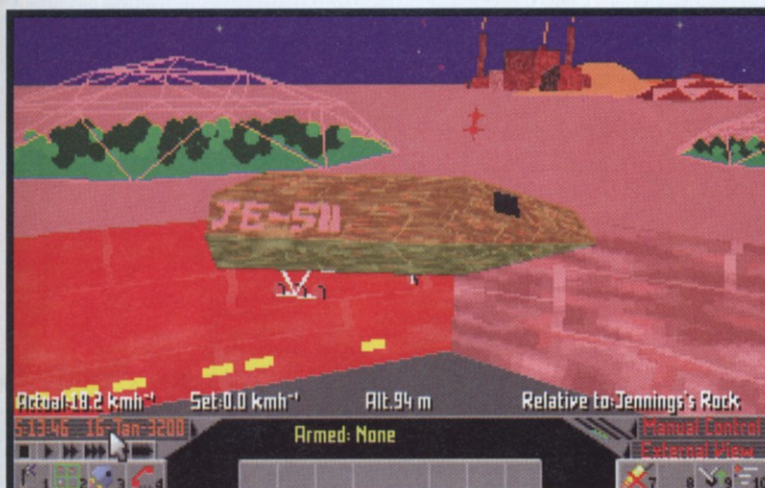
The original *Elite* was heavy on trading. The new version gives a huge choice of careers. Those of a solitary disposition should try their hand at mining. Or you can ferry goods and people, take on missions for the military of either side, or become an assassin, pirate, drug smuggler, slave runner and general villain. On each planet

'Elite was heavy on trading. The new version gives a huge choice of careers.'



Frontier: Elite II





(Above left) The texture mapped, filled polygons shown to good effect in a planet scene.

(Above right) Forget riding off into the sunset. Riding off into the Milky Way is far more romantic.

(Below left) Cooeee! What a pretty purple sunset. Hang on, that's not Battersea power station over there is it?

(Below right) Aargh nooooo! Not docking, please don't make me do the docking again. Waaagghh!

or base there is a bulletin board. This will be full of people asking for a lift, or pleas for news on missing persons. Shady people will ask that an executive be 'retired' or that slaves and drugs be taken to distant outposts. Before you take any commission make sure you know about any time penalties. Try to 'bunch' tasks so you can do three or so in one journey. Be suspicious of people paying over the odds for transport – they could be on the run – and watch out for police 'stings'.

You can't be very wicked at first, because you haven't proved yourself and your ship isn't well enough equipped to evade death and failure. Like the original *Elite* you must learn to walk before you can scarp from the coppers. Once you start earning serious money, you can do almost anything and get away with it – just like life.

Happy shopping

It's not just a matter of buying more missiles. There is a vast array of weaponry to choose from. Lasers, cannons, smart missiles that will fox any defences, and a range of scanners. Some will give full information on any ship – including bounty – but the handiest thing for an outlaw is the Hyperspace Cloud Analyser. This gives full information on craft going through hyperspace. If you're escaping pirates you can force a 'mis-jump' by pressing ALT and F8. When the pirates follow you through hyperspace to your supposed destination you're gone.

You can also hire crew but you must be careful. You want people who will be cheap and not mind what you tell them to do. If you're a pirate it makes little sense to crew your ship with Quakers.

There are 82 basic missions, but you can simply fly around looking at the detail on the planets. All major objects in the solar system are accurately rendered and there are 10¹¹ (100,000,000,000) other systems to explore.

Playing the game

The good news is that *Frontier – Elite II* is more playable than the original. For one thing, there is no manual docking. The console will be familiar from the original: display icons on the left and

IN PERSPECTIVE

Frontier: Elite II

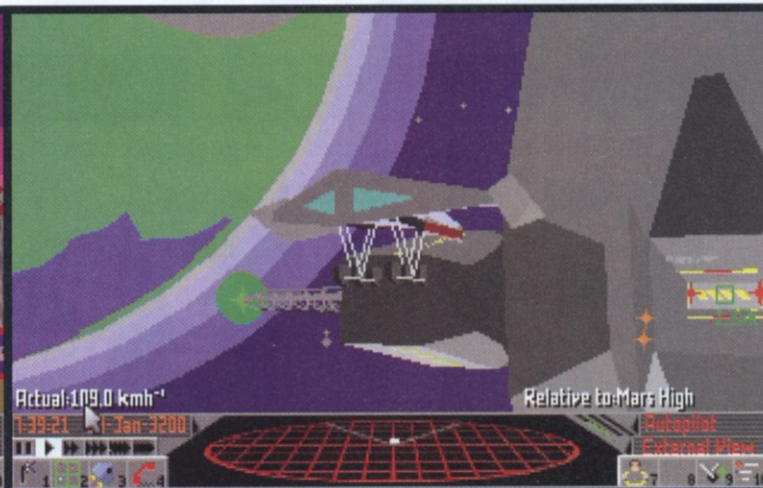
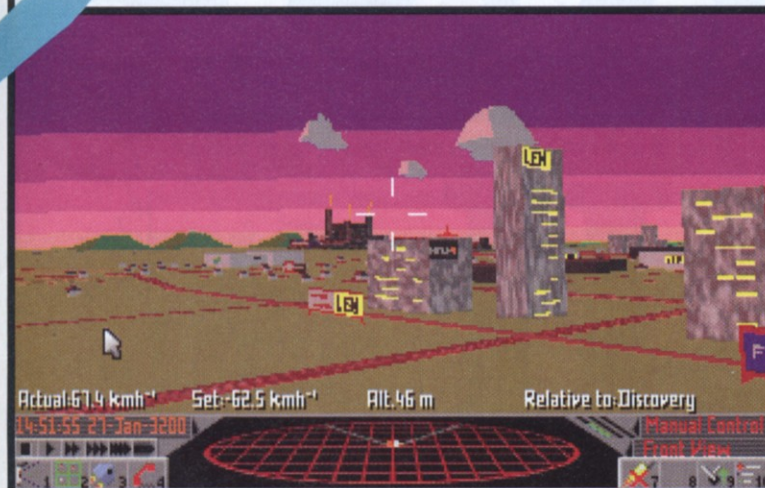
Lightspeed

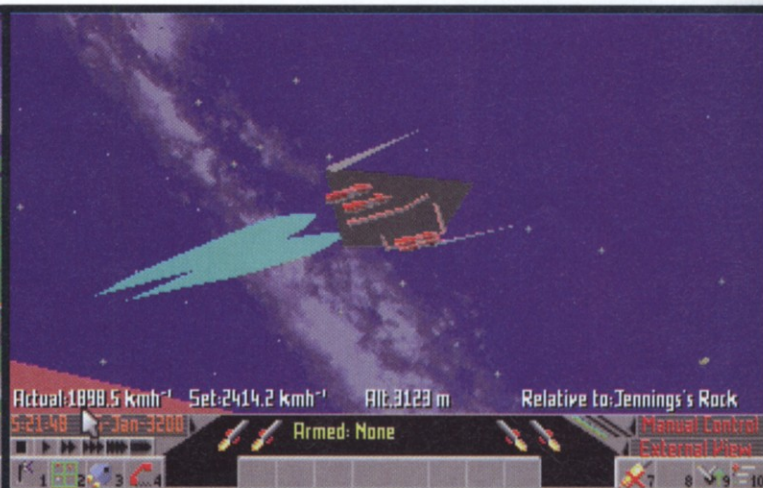
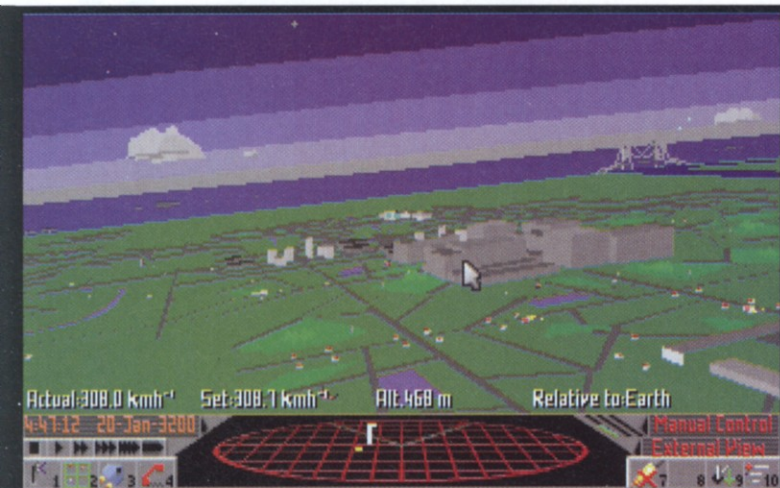
Mercenary

Privateer

Protostar

Star Control II





DAVID BRABEN

David Braben sits in a small, neat study overlooking the Cam. The desk is taken up with a laptop, an Amiga, a Hi Fi and a new Compaq ProLinea 4/66. On the wall hang his awards. There is the gold disk for 100,000 sales of the BBC Micro version of *Elite*. And on the 486 is *Elite II*.

A successor to *Elite* has been a long time coming. David Braben has been working on it for five years. He is amongst the last of the one-man programmers. That means it takes a long time, but it means that it doesn't get out the door until he's satisfied. And David Braben is a perfectionist.

His interest in astronomy has given *Elite II* the most realistic arena of any space game. He has extrapolated the composition of the universe from the a 20 light year radius about our sun. The conditions that give rise to planets, their disposition, mass, temperature and atmosphere have all been implemented with extraordinary care.

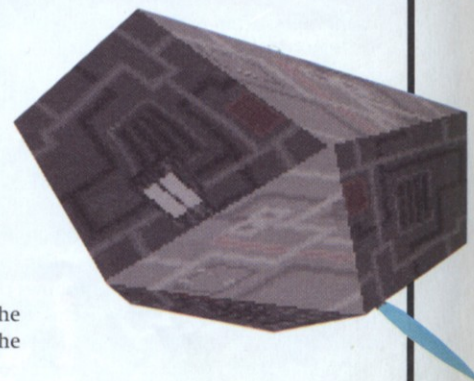
What next? 'A rest', he says – well, he has been working rather hard. Then it's down to the job of converting *Frontier* for other platforms, like the 3DO.

function icons on the right. In the middle is the scanner giving the position of your ship and surrounding objects. The number displayed on each icon refers to the keyboard shortcuts for that particular action.

The usual view is the front one through the cockpit but there are rear, external and turret views, too. The external view can be rotated and zoomed in or out. The turret view is essential for firing lasers on those ships that have gun turrets. There are two sights: the velocity sight, which shows in which direction you are travelling and the gun sight which shows where you are pointing. The two only drift out of alignment if you suddenly change course.

Weapons control is activated by pressing F5. This calls up the panel from which you can select and fire weapons. As well as the missiles and lasers there are mines (and dummy mines), energy bombs (which will blow up another ship's drive) and plasma accelerators – massive lasers that can destroy whole cities. All are targeted by clicking on the offending ship and pressing 'M' or clicking the 'fire' icon. Your HUD will show the range, and a targeting 'tunnel' if you wish – but the latter is best reserved for landing and docking.

The weapons panel is also used for defence. The ECM system destroys all mines and homing missiles in the vicinity and there is an advanced model – the Naval ECM – which will even destroy 'smart' mines.



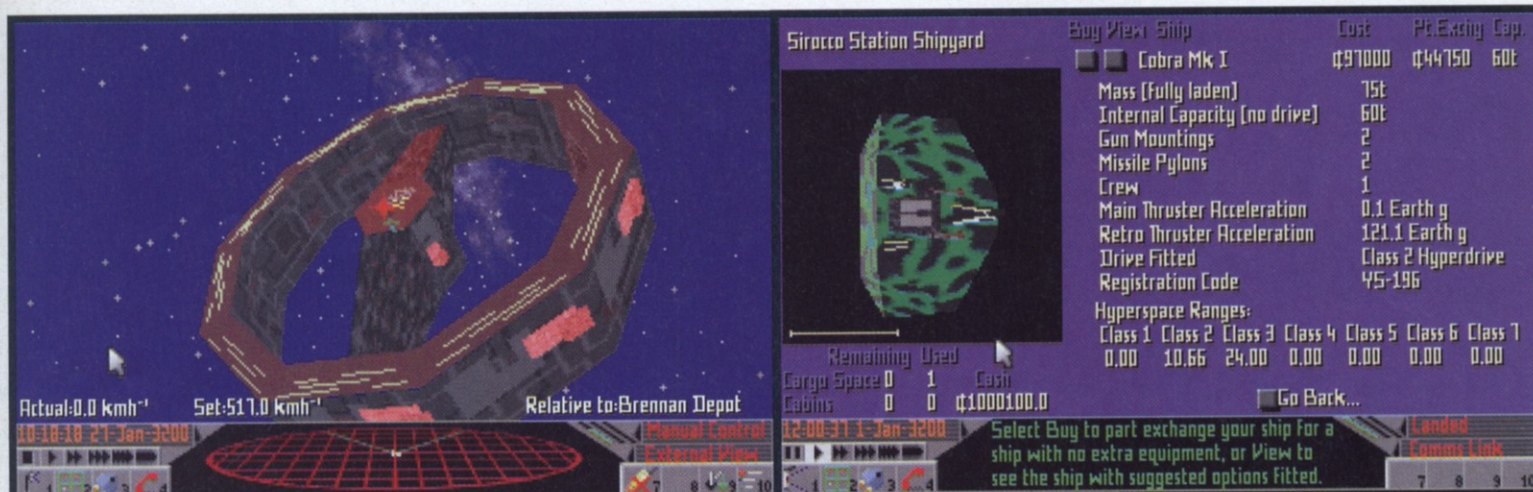
(Above left) Ha ha ha! Time to buzz this Earth city and cause another UFO scare.

(Above right) Once again, there are many different ships to have and hold, and all of them with an extensive range of add-ons available from Halfords.

(Below left) Blimey – this is a bit more complicated than your average A to Z. Hmm, reckon I took the wrong junction just after Alpha Centauri.

(Below right) Okay Mr Space Station, lets see how you like a Naval Missile up your docking ring!





missiles. There is also a useful automatic hull sealing and repair system and a shield against lasers and missiles.


The map icon brings up a three dimensional chart of all 100,000,000,000 stars in the galaxy. You can centre the map on any system which is then highlighted and information on it displayed on the console. Your current location is in pink.

Clicking the data icon will bring up information about the economy and social structure of the selected system. An orbital map shows the movement of all bodies around the star or stars (there are stable binary systems). Movement around the galaxy is easy: click on the target icon then click on where you want to go and leave the rest to the autopilot. The autopilot will even ask for



clearance and then lower the undercarriage or dock. You can do everything manually, if you are that way inclined. You must ask for docking rights on all space stations and some systems – like penal colonies – need special permits before you can enter them.

The galaxy is very, very big, as Carl Sagan might say. You can accelerate time on long journeys or else you can use the hyperspace option. Hyperspace is far more sophisticated than on the original. When a ship triggers it a 'tunnel' appears through the space-time continuum and bright disks mark the entry and egress points. Although hyperspace takes place instantaneously for the crew of the ship, the process can take a subjective week. So you will see if someone is about to hyperspace near you and decide whether or not to hang around and attack it. The drawback is that pilots will hang around the hyperspace point and get you on arrival.

The sound effects are magnificent with restful background music ranging from Mussorgsky to Wagner. It is almost impossible to review this game without sounding like advertising copy. *Frontier – Elite II* is not only brilliant in every department; it shows up its rivals to be the shoddy imitations that they are. 

ELITE – THE ORIGINAL

Many years ago, when personal computers were called microcomputers, people didn't have problems with DOS and hard disk size. They were worried about membrane keyboards that never worked and dodgy cassette interfaces. A floppy disk was a luxury item and the ridiculously slow drives cost hundreds of pounds. 48K was the usual memory size and so games had to be tightly coded – so they would fit in the memory – and very playable – because the graphics were usually, perforce, crap.

Elite stunned the world when it appeared on the BBC micro – a posh machine then. You played the pilot of a Cobra spaceship. Starting with 100 credits you had to trade to get more money, add bits to your ship (or buy a new one). Then you could take to a life of crime, robbing rich merchants and fleeing the police in their souped-up Fer de Lances.

Bits of it were tedious, like getting enough money at the start. Bits of it were difficult, like escaping from hordes of pirates. Other bits were damned near impossible, like manual docking. David Braben is still bemused at people's perseverance. *Elite* was translated to virtually every machine format. People swapped tips, hacks and pilot files. *Elite* had an impact and success that software publishers now only dream of.



PC ZONE score

Unrivalled classic;
nothing comes close.

95

Price: £39.99 Out: Now

Published: Gametek

Telephone: 0753 553445

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 2MB
(needs some EMS)

Minimum Processor: 386

Minimum Speed: 25MHz

Installation: Optional

Minimum Hard Disk: 1.5Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster,
Sound Blaster Pro, Roland

Controls: Keyboard, Joystick, Mouse

Comments: Needs 3.5" High Density
disk drive

(Above left) Intelligent hamsters will take to space in craft just like this one!

(Above right) 'Ere you are Guvnor – nice little number, only 30,000 light years on the clock, 0 to 3 million miles per hour in under six seconds, and still six months MOT. Tell you what, tell you what – I'll chuck in a free tank of petrol and a pair of fluffy dice – I can't say fairer than that now can I?



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TOUGH ENOUGH...
GO PLAY IN THE PARK**

IF IT'S NOT JURASSIC PARK IT'S EXTINCT

**PC COMPATIBLES
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**SUPER NINTENDO
ENTERTAINMENT SYSTEM**
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SYSTEM**



Team editing

All teams can be edited, but only minimally. All you can change are players' names. You can't change the colour of their skin or hair, so if you want to rename Carlton Palmer as Chris Waddle, you can't adjust the skill ratings accordingly, and neither will the sprite 'look like' either of them. Ratings are fixed, measured in eight areas and virtually unnoticeable during a game anyway.

(Right) See that blob with the line under it? that's Gordon Strachan that is. Hang on a minute, Gordon has ginger hair...

Dino Dini's goal seems to be to make as many football games as is humanly possible.

Patrick McCarthy's goal is to be left alone with a good book, a bottle of Old Bushmill and a village-sized Tiramisu. What a wealth of variety the human experience offers.

Dino Dini's



LD NAVAJO PROVERB she say: 'Never trust game that has name ahead of title.' Kevin Toms' *Football Manager*, Emlyn Hughes's *International Soccer* and Luke Goss's *Invest And Prosper Game* are three that spring to mind. It could be said that *Dino Dini's Goal* is not exactly in exalted company. However, life, they tell me, is full of surprises, so off we go.

Initial impressions

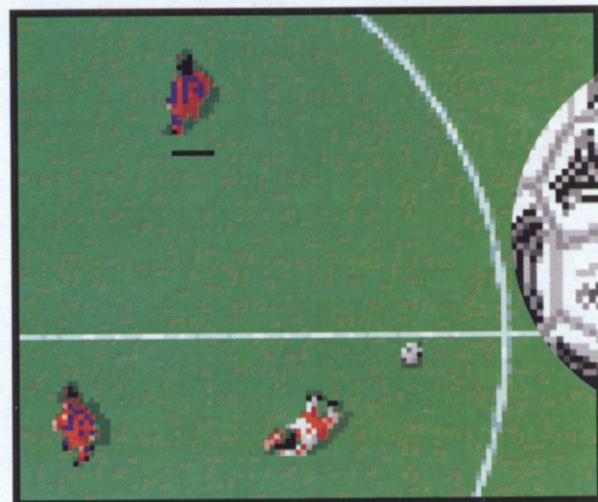
The expected range of game types and options are available: you can construct your own league of anything from between two and 32 teams, playing each other up to ten times (a useful indicator says how many games this will entail each team playing for the mathematically challenged), select points for a win, and human and computer levels of competence. There are the accepted cup options (number of legs/extra time/penalties) and exhibition game options, too. Two-player games can only be played with two joysticks, which is a bit of a pain.

Options

The options screen is extensive, allowing you to decide everything from the duration of the game and the direction you'll play it (horizontally or vertically) to the level of expertise of the goalkeepers (from Schmeichel to Mimms). The range of pitches available isn't as wide as that in *Sensible Soccer*. There are only four: normal, wet, muddy and Wembley (for those big cup matches that nobody wants to play at Elland Road).

Team selection

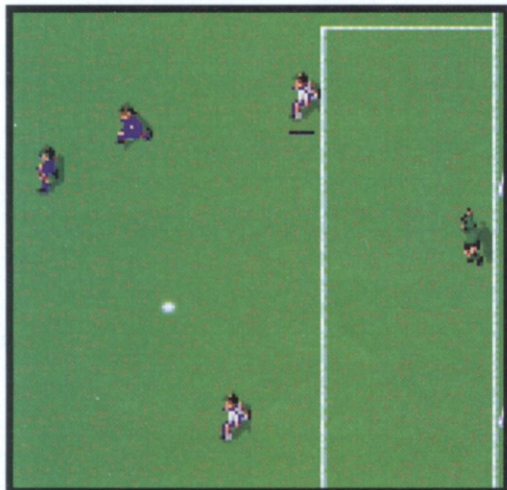
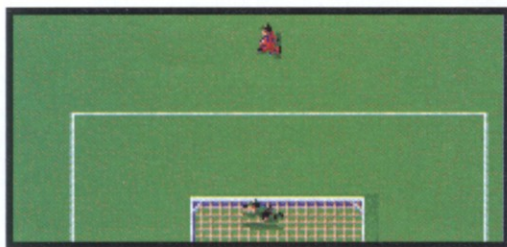
There are a great many teams available: the French, Spanish, German, Italian and Scottish top divisions are all present; the English Premier League and a few prominent First Division teams are also there. There's a European selection (a mix of the above) and all the European national teams too. All teams



... and a beautifully executed swan-dive by Gianluca Vialli.

have a full squad of players – up to 28 strong – from which you select the team for a game, along with two substitutes. This leaves plenty of room for the George Graham-style selection of 13 centre-backs.

Playing formations available aren't as varied as those in *Sensible Soccer*, consisting only of 4-4-2, 4-3-3, 5-3-2 and 4-2-4. Teams have a default setting which can only be permanently altered in the Editor screens. You can change and save the team members and it will recall these between games; but if you want to change formation from game to game it gets irritating as it keeps going back to the original formation and scattering the numbers (and thus positions) of players about at random (a defender in the centre forward spot, and so on).



PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 588K

Minimum Processor: 286

Minimum Speed: 20Mhz

Installation: Yes

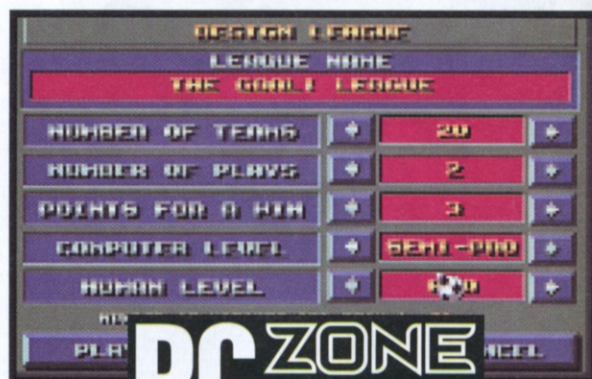
Minimum Hard Disk: 3Mb

Minimum Graphics: 256 colour VGA

Soundcards: Sound Blaster,
Ad-Lib, Roland

Controls: Keyboard

Comments: Analogue, Digital joysticks
recommended



Goal

This makes for irritating and time-consuming adjustments before the start of every game in any kind of lengthy campaign. Where the game scores over *Sensible Soccer* is that this screen can be called up and adjustments made via the substitution option throughout a game; so if a defender is sent off, you're not left with a gaping hole in your defence. You can also call up a match report mid-game which shows everything from just how many more shots on goal you've had, to how small a percentage of the play and how many more players booked.

Views

Whether played horizontally or vertically, there are two different sizes at which the game can be viewed, and neither are very good; zoomed in, you don't see enough of the pitch in the small playing area; zoomed out, you can hardly see what's going on because everybody is too small. You can toggle between the two views as you feel like it, or you can choose either of these options at the start. You can also select Auto, which keeps the view zoomed in until a set-piece occurs, then zooms out. The 'radar view' of the pitch is useless, being placed outside the frame of the pitch in the top left, and information letting you know who has the ball is also way out of the line of sight, beneath an obvious 'filler' picture of a large football that's a complete waste of space. Why the playing area can't just fill the screen and this ridiculous arrangement be dumped is beyond me. It worked perfectly well on the Amiga version.

The players are very scrappy-looking, and seem to be running around wearing partly shredded cornflakes packets. The sound is terrible, even with a soundcard. The much-vaunted crowd noises are nothing but white noise, and the sound effects are less like that of 'boot on leather' than of 'length of hollow rubber pipe on head'.

(Right) All these windows show how you can design your own cup, league and teams.

How it plays

It's very different from *Sensible Soccer*. Anyone who played *Kick Off* will find it familiar, which is unsurprising given that Mr Dini was one of *Kick Off*'s designers before going solo after musical differences. (Anyone who played the PC version of *Kick Off* will be pleased to note that the lower third of the pitch is not concealed beneath an enormous Axminster). The main difference is that, just like in the Premier League, players don't automatically bring the ball under some kind of control, preferring instead to allow it to whack off their knees, ankles or testicles rather than slow the game down in any way with continental trickery. The ball bounces off players unless you press fire to control it; hold it a fraction too long and the button press will be transferred to the next player who will hoof it madly, and your attempt to aim becomes aftertouch. As such, it takes a lot of getting used to. Some might like it but, personally, I prefer *Sensible Soccer*, as *Goal*'s approach tends to produce a game more like pinball than football as it should be played.

All in all, *Goal* isn't even close to being the saviour of PC football games. *Sensible Soccer* still rules in a weak field, and the Navajo saying holds true once again.

PC ZONE score

Kick Off with sideways options (but it works). Not as good as *Sensible Soccer*.

60

Price: £35.99 **Out:** Now
Published: Virgin Games
Telephone: 081 960 2255

"WAIT 'TILL YOU SEE
THE REDS OF THEIR EYES..."



VIRGIN INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS A NORLEDGE/HICKMAN PRODUCTION A PROBE GAME "TERMINATOR 2"
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WARDROBE MAHATMA COAT ORIGINAL SCORE 205,500 GAGS JO KING HUGH MERR
BASED ON THE FILM "TERMINATOR 2: JUDGMENT DAY" DIRECTOR JONNY WATSON

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ems to go right.

3

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Virgin

Lose is a four letter word.



MORTAL KOMBAT

VIRGIN INTERACTIVE ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS A NORLEDGE/HICKMAN PRODUCTION A PROBE GAME
LEE THAL HUGH JUPPERCUT DANIELLE WOODYATT PETER BALL SCREENPLAY BY ANNE NIHLATE
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on Amiga

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Virgin



Gun in hand Nigel went in search for the man who sold him that dodgy shish kebeb.

DRACULA

Mark Burgess shuns the morning light with determination and success. So who could be better to review *Dracula*?

DRACULA, THE BOOK by Bram Stoker, is ideal for a computer game. The main characters narrate by turns, telling the story through letters, journals and recordings. The reader is the only one who can bring these strands together and see, long before any of the characters, the enormity of the horror to come. You can see what a good RPG this would make – along the lines of *Ultima Underworld*. Furthermore, the book is out of copyright.

'The graphics are suitably moody and there's a good handling of light.'

Psychosis, however, have paid ready money for *Dracula*, the film license, so it must have something special in mind surely? Perhaps a game that tries to recapture Coppola's lush visual style? Well, no, actually. Parts of it have a superficial resemblance to *Ultima Underworld*, but the game uses the *Wolfenstein* game engine. That means wandering around a maze killing things.

Your starter with ten

The game opens in a mouldering graveyard but quickly moves to the crypt. You start off with ten silver bullets, three communion wafers and an apple. The bullets are for shooting the undead which rise out of coffins dotted about the place. I don't have a manual so I'll just have to call them skeleton, zombie, man in armour and chap in lion suit. The last is the hardest to kill. The communion

wafers, or – as they are presumably consecrated – the particles of the Host, are used to seal the coffins. And the apple? That's for keeping your strength up. As is the way in adventure games, people have left bread, wine and bits of chicken all over the place. It looks like Glyndebourne except, of course, for the corpses hanging from the trees.

There are spare silver bullets and particles of the Host to be had. The latter are inaccurately called 'Holy Wafers' – obviously the fires of Spitalfields were kindled in vain. You will also find keys to unlock the various gates that impede your progress. There are traps and secret doors, which

IN PERSPECTIVE

Very like *Wolfenstein* in look, feel and tactics. Not as testing as *Ultima of Destiny*.

Alone In The Dark

Dracula

Spear Of Destiny

Ultima Underworld II

Wolfenstein

PC ZONE score

A good, challenging game but the execution should have been better.

65

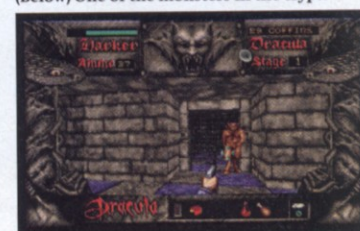
Price: £39.99 Out: Now
Published: Psygnosis
Telephone: 051 709 5755

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 545K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 20MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 3Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Roland LAPC-1, MT-32 SCCI
Controls: Keyboard, Microsoft compatible mouse
Comments: EMS driver required



(Above) Sometimes you find useful things littered around.
(Below) One of the monsters in the crypt.





There are hundreds of films based on Bram Stoker's original. The wierdest casting is Jack Palance as the Count in *Dracula* (D. Curtis, 1973, UK) and the most right-on interpretation has to be *The Satanic Rites of Dracula* (A. Gibson, 1973, UK) where Christopher Lee plays the count as a property developer. The closest to the original is probably *El Conde Dracula* (J Franco, 1970, Spain). Coppola's version was written by James V Hart who also wrote the screenplay for *Hook*. Hart insists that he stayed as close to the book as possible. Coppola chose the tale to explore his theme of Catholicism and damnation (cf. *The Godfather*).

The Count is a crusader who discovers that his beloved has killed herself while he was fighting the Turks. He thinks that God has deserted him and sides with the devil, turning from *defensor fidei* to *malleus fidei*. Coppola is fascinated with the obvious Christian overtones of *Dracula* (blood equals everlasting life) and exploits the iconography of the Church to the full.

The film is stunningly beautiful and shot mainly in red and black. Coppola can rival Greenaway when it comes to composition. The baroque costumes are by Eiko Ishioka, who designed the poster for the Japanese version of *Apocalypse Now*.

you can operate after a simple bit of puzzle-solving. Some flagstones will spin you round until you find the right switch to turn them off. Other switches reveal hidden staircases. Often, you throw a switch and then blunder around for ages trying to see what difference it has made.

As in *Wolfenstein*, when you find a locked door you can bet that the key is miles away; this is a game that cries out for maps. During your journey through the crypt things get more hectic: in some rooms there are four or more coffins, all spewing forth monsters, so you have to have sharp reflexes to shoot them, seal the coffins and heal yourself at the same time. A dodgy mouse driver here and you're dead.

Of mice and men

Control is by mouse and keyboard. Like *Ultima Underworld*, moving the mouse with the left button down will move you in that direction. The further you move it to the edge of the screen, the faster you go. You pick things up by standing close and clicking on the mouse button. Use objects by double-clicking on them. The inventory is a bar along the bottom of the screen; the top shows how much ammunition you have left and how many coffins there are to seal. The space bar toggles between a knife and your pistol and both weapons are deployed with the right mouse button. Pressing Escape brings up your current score and a mouse click gets you to the load/save game/quit menu. You can save a game at any point.

The graphics are suitably moody, and there is a good handling of light. The trouble is that they are very repetitive and do not scroll well. This makes the game hard on the eyes. It has some atmospheric music together with simple but effective sound effects.

Crypt kicking

There are three zones in the game. The first is the crypt, then Carfax Abbey and, at last, Dracula's castle. As you seal the last tomb in each zone Dracula appears in one of his incarnations - a bat, a wolf and finally the old man - a kind of boss of the level which you may have come across before.

As you go through the zones, the enemies get tougher. Whereas the early undead specimens just hack at you, later adversaries will shoot at you. There are gypsies and brides of Dracula to look forward to. The aim of the game is therefore to rob Dracula of his servants by sealing their tombs and dispatch the bloody Count himself. It is hard work and I must admit that there were some bits I couldn't have got through without the help of my esteemed chums, the HackMasters™. However, the things you have to do are much the same - you shoot things, you pick things up, you chuck things in coffins - and there are times when it lurches from challenging to frustrating.

It is one of those games where you think: blow this for a game of darts and then five minutes later you are back again for more punishment. If you want either an undemanding adventure or a shoot 'em up with a twist and some strategy, then this is for you. People who liked *Wolfenstein* will love it (although be aghast at the scrolling). **Z**



(Top) Now, which item should I use to open this gate? The edam of course.
(Above) Could this indicate the presence of a secret passage?



Get your teeth into this you lucky people! We've got the following goodies to give away, courtesy of Columbia Tristar Home Video.



- 1 A video* of Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, directed by Francis Ford Coppola.
- 2 A video* of the making of Coppola's film
- 3 A CD of the film's soundtrack
- 4 *Dracula*, the board game
- 5 *Dracula*, the computer game from Psygnosis

All you have to do is answer these simple questions:

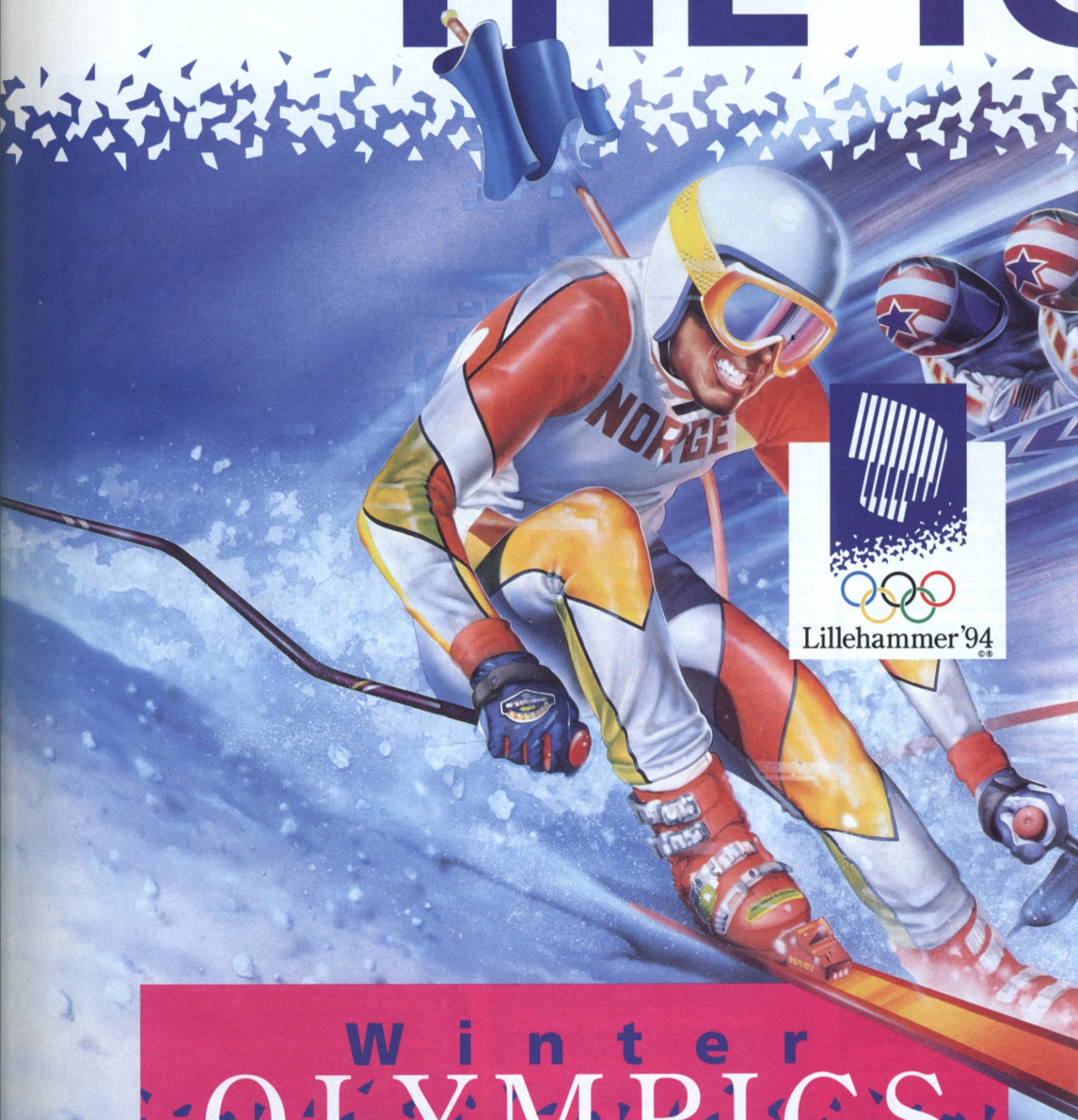
- 1 *Dracula* is based on the real life character
a) Genghis Khan b) Vlad The Impaler c) Lily The Pink
- 2 Which of the following films did Coppola *not* direct?
a) *Apocalypse Now* b) *The Untouchables* c) *The Godfather*
- 3 *Dracula* arrives in England at
a) Charing Cross b) Whitby c) Heathrow

Send your answers on a postcard to: Stake and chips, PC Zone, 19 Bolsover Street, London, W1P 7HJ to arrive no later than 1 December 1993.

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*videos are VHS only

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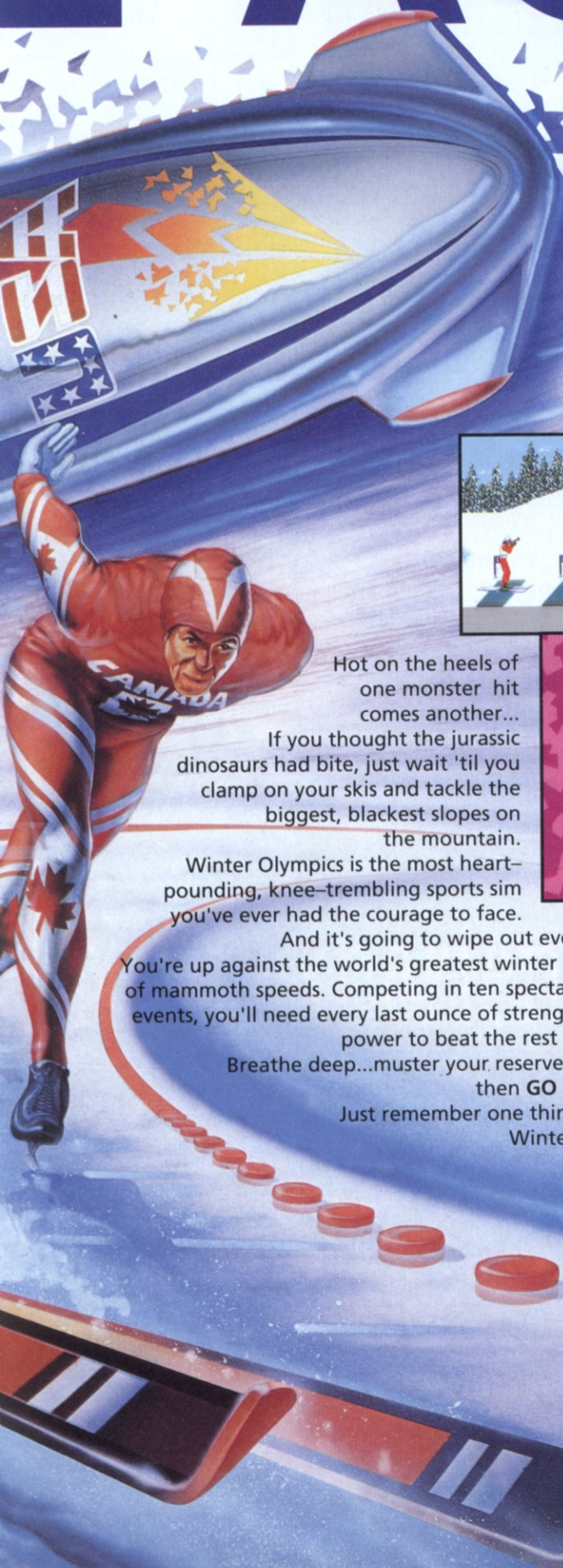


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E AGE



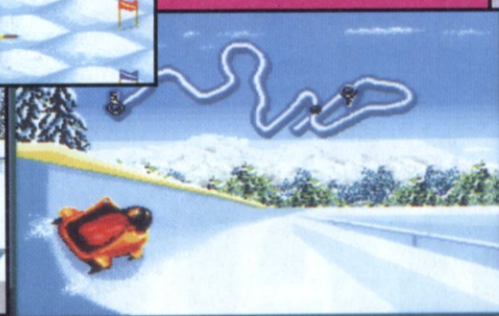
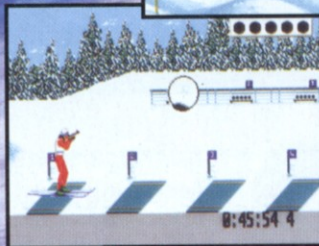
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AND PC CD-ROM.



Screen shots from a selection of available formats (see above)





COGITO

Cogito, a seemingly innocent puzzle game for windows, causes Chris Anderson to furrow his brow and get wrinkles between his eyebrows.



IF THERE'S ONE thing there's no shortage of for the PC, it's puzzle games. Just about everybody who's anybody has made at least one. So what's so different about this one?

Well, not a lot really, except maybe the fact that you need Microsoft Windows before you can run it. Apart from that it's more or less par for the course. Each level in *Cogito* shows you a complete diagram, all neat and tidy and aesthetically perfect. Then the nasty computer comes along and messes it all up, leaving you to

piece it all back together again. Sounds simple, and it is, at least to start with.

Using the directional arrows surrounding the playing grid, you have to

move various pieces around to form the original diagram. At first, the arrows move the pieces pretty much where you'd expect them to go, but in the later stages you stare in unbridled astonishment as the arrows move parts of the screen in a completely illogical fashion.

This is very confusing to begin with but after a few levels you start to get the hang of it. You also might start to think of hanging yourself. This game is not easy, particularly when moving a piece in one place moves a whole bunch of them somewhere else. At times this is more frustrating than taxing but with a little perseverance (and a fair amount of patience) you can work it out and struggle on to the next stage.

Every time you manage to achieve the seemingly impossible and complete a level, you are rewarded with a password to the next. The shape of the pieces and colour of the boards change as French software house Atreid Concept proceeds to throw every dirty trick in the book at you over some 120 levels. You can change the backdrop for the grid: the four supplied include Happyland and Alien World; they look nice but don't do much.

I wouldn't get too excited about the fact it has a Windows interface either. There are no overlapping windows for different parts of the game or menu bars for access to extra features, so you may as well be running it as a Windowed DOS session.

Cogito is not the most original game in the world, but the puzzles are quite clever and if you're prepared to spend half an hour or so getting into it you're in for a real challenge. It's deceptively easy to play but bloody difficult to beat. **Z**



PC ZONE score

A reasonably entertaining and challenging puzzle game, but only for the patient.

57

Price: £29.99 Out: Now
Published: Mindscape
Telephone: 0444 246333

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 2Mb
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 12MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 1Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: All soundcards
Controls: Mouse
Comments: Needs Windows 3.1 to run and SVGA card for 256 colours

'It's deceptively easy to play but bloody difficult to beat.'

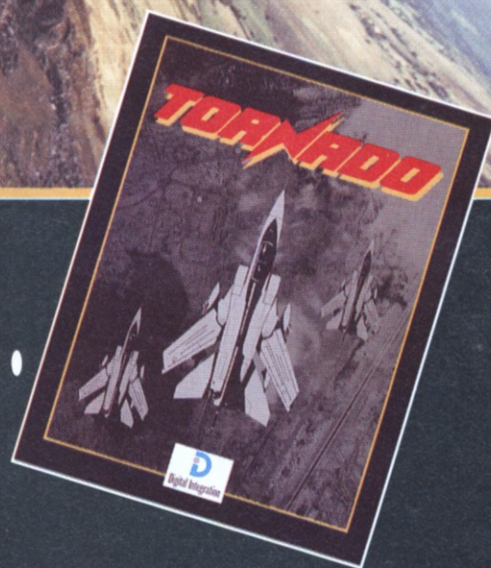
(Top) Nice, pretty, harmless little balls. Wait till they start.
(Left) Cheer up Mr Happy. Only 100 levels to go.

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PC Screen Shots



HOW TO BE TOP IN CHESS

The ineffable Pete McNamara sums it all up: 'Skill, Determination and Knowledge of the game'. The great Reuben Fine summarised the ten golden rules as follows:

- 1 Open with either the e or d pawn.
- 2 Make a developing move that threatens something.
- 3 Develop knights before bishops.
- 4 Pick the most suitable square for a piece and develop it there once and for all.
- 5 Make no more than one or two pawn moves at the opening.
- 6 Don't bring your queen out early.
- 7 Castle as soon as possible – preferably kingside.
- 8 Play to get control of the centre.
- 9 Always try to keep at least one pawn in the centre.
- 10 Don't sacrifice without a good and adequate reason.

Like all rules, these can – and sometimes must – be broken. But like all rules, you must be clear why you are breaking them and be alive to the consequences. Ask yourself before every move: 'How does this affect the centre? How does it fit in with the development of the other pieces?'

The 3D board. Kasparov reckons '?!' then changes his mind to '!'.



CHESS NOTATION

- ! Good move
- !! Brilliant move (for Orwell fans: doubleplus good)
- ? Bad move
- ?? Blunder
- !? Uncertainty
- ?! Doubtful move

Kasparov's Gambit



So you reckon you can do better than Short? Mark Burgess on how Kasparov is coming to a hard disk near you.



LAST CHESS PROGRAMS are moving away from gimmicks and towards solid playing. This is as the game itself moves in the opposite direction. The ACM computer chess championship this year was won by a program that ran on a 486 pc. *Socrates II* beat the brutish *Cray Blitz*, which looks at 100 million moves. Such blitzkrieg tactics are being replaced with a more intuitive understanding of the game. After all, a Grand Master will consider between 50 and 100 positions a move and still beat most computers.

Garry Kasparov was disenchanted with the state of chess programs and decided to help develop one that would help the 99 percent of players that can be beaten by a microcomputer. That's the fairytale anyway. I mean, Electronic Arts don't want you to think that this is just another licensing deal.

The program comes on five HD disks, takes up 11Mb of Hard disk space and uses 32K as a hash table. It needs 2Mb configured as EMS. The default display is a workman-like 2D board with analysis and coaching windows but you can configure it to your needs with a pretty 3D board and lots of windows. The analysis board is beautiful. You can see all the moves the computer is contemplating. Controls are easy with a mouse or keyboard. Garry himself keeps his beady eye on you and shouts advice from the touchline, as it were.

Some of this advice is wrong. 'Your bishop – or whatever – is in jeopardy!' he will shout, when all he really means is that it is temporarily unprotected. No point hunting around the board for a threat; just tuck a pawn nearby and he'll be happy.

You can play 37 computer opponents with ELO ratings of between 800 (Neanderthal) to 2800 (Kasparov). You can alter the attributes – aggressiveness, creativity, attentiveness, orthodoxy and strength – of any of these or create your own opponent. If you elect to play Kasparov, the program enters 'serious' mode for maximum strength and, of course, Garry doesn't help you out. Does it play like Kasparov? I tried the fourth Short-Kasparov game. The original goes 1e4 c5 2nf3 d6 3d4 cxd4. I started out

with 1e4 and was surprised when the computer played e6 – the French defence and an anathema to Kasparov's aggressive style.

The program has a hint feature that really is a hint feature; that is, not much help at all. You're facing, say, a Caro-Kann defence and have forgotten what to do next. Press 'H' and Garry will say: 'move your pawn'. Cheers Garry, I mean there's eight of the little buggers. Which one? And where? So, if you're an absolute beginner and want hints of the d2-d4 variety this isn't for you. The program assumes that if told to move your knight you at least know which one to move and where it should go.

There are masses of tutorials ranging from simple moves (castling, en passant) to advance stalemate positions and back rank mating (no, that isn't what you used to do in the cinema). There is a library of 500 famous games, all with a commentary by Kasparov. Here he is on *Deep Thought* – Kasparov after 1e4 c5, 2c3: 'a pity that the

programmers chose this wimpy variation (Alapin) for such an important encounter... a boring and slow approach to the opening'. The match was a classic because a bug in the *Deep Thought* program

stopped it castling until move 17 (although it could have done it after 11 b3).

The library of games can be sorted by black, white or theme. It has one peculiarity; out of the 116 games featuring Kasparov, there is only one (Timman-Kasparov Hilversum (m/3) 1985) in which he loses. This is a shame because I wanted to compare Karpov's (*Chessmaster 3000*) and Kasparov's comments on the same game.

The personality of Kasparov comes across strongly. When he says: 'I have not considered that move', you know he's marked it down as ? or ?! and you panic. With luck he'll say: 'I see your point' or 'I take it back' and you feel ridiculously proud. When he says: 'just what I would have played' your head swells. He'll encourage you by saying: 'Keep it up! Gambit may resign soon' and discourage you by saying: 'that doesn't look right'. ('Why not?' you shout at the screen. But he won't tell you.)

Kasparov's Gambit is aimed at unseating *Chessmaster*. *Chessmaster* is kinder to beginners and has more layouts (if that's important). I have a strong feeling that it also plays a tougher game. *Kasparov's Gambit*, on the other hand, is ideal for players who want to improve their game without being spoon-fed. The game it plays is less 'codified' than *Chessmaster* and more like playing a human. Plus, *Kasparov's Gambit* does improve your game. Fearful of Kasparov's frown you try your very best.

- 1) Kasparov sneers at Deep Thought.
- 2) Wittily named opponents.
- 3) Gambit is supposed to have an ELO of 2770 but I can beat it.
- 4) Garry talks through Timman-Kasparov Hilversum m/3 1985.

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 580K free base
RAM 2Mb EMS

Minimum Processor: 386 or better

Minimum Speed: 16MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 11Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Pro Audio

Spectrum, Roland, Sound Blaster

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

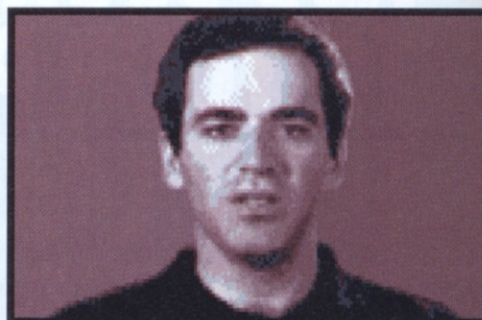
Comments: DOS 5.0 or higher

PC ZONE score

Excellent chess game
with attitude and
personality

85

Price: £44.99 **Out:** Now
Published: Electronic Arts
Telephone: 0753 549442



Why Kasparov has the hump

In 1985 Kasparov met Karpov in the Hall of Columns in Moscow. The winner was to be the first with six wins. Karpov got four wins in the first nine games, but then Kasparov hunkered down to wear out his opponent with a series of draws. After 46 games the score was 5-1 to Karpov. The venue was changed and there were worries that the contest would never end. Kasparov took the score to 5-3 but it was rumoured that Karpov was close to a breakdown. Chess is a physically demanding game; a chess player will have a pulse rate of about a 100 for five hours or more. The head of the international chess federation (FIDES), Florencio Campomanes, stepped in and declared the thing a non-contest on the grounds of length.

Kasparov was furious and still is, although winning the rematch in 1985 cheered him up a bit. Ever since the farce in Moscow he has sought to set up a rival organisation to FIDES. When FIDES presented Kasparov and Short with a match in Manchester without consulting them, the two players set up their own organisation in conjunction with Raymond Keene, the chess correspondent of the Times. Whether the new organisation, the Professional Chess Association, will survive the Savoy debacle is another matter.

Things look little better for FIDES. At the time of writing, the Karpov-Timman match has collapsed because the Dutch can't raise their half of the prize fund and Oman is denying that it ever promised the other half. Maybe Kerry Packer will step in.

IN PERSPECTIVE

The obvious comparison is with *Chessmaster 3000*. The *Complete Chess System* looks rather basic now, but might be worth looking at if disk space is at a premium.

Chessmaster 3000

Complete Chess System

Kasparov's Gambit

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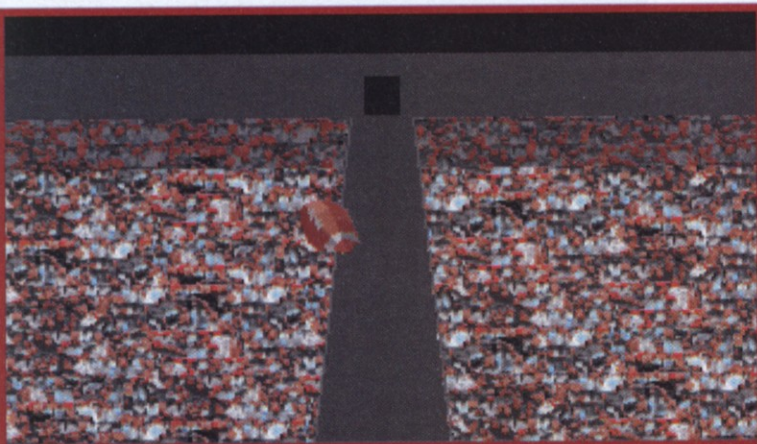
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NFL PLAYOFF



FRONT PAGE SPORTS FOOTBALL PRO



NFL COACHES' CLUB FOOTBALL



Two American football games plopped onto our desk within days of each other. Only one man could possibly review them – **Patrick McCarthy**: six foot two, 196 lbs of rippling subcutaneous fat and an eighth year veteran from the University of West Arkansas Belligerent Crablice.



FRONT PAGE SPORTS FOOTBALL PRO (hereafter referred to as FPS), is a re-hash, a soup-up, or an enhancement of Dynamix's original *Front Page Sports Football*. NFL COACHES' CLUB FOOTBALL (hereafter referred to as CCF), on the other hand, is a new contender in an already hugely overcrowded field from MicroProse. (Like baseball, there are approximately eight trillion attempts to simulate American football in the computer games world.)

FPS is licensed by the National Football League Players' Association but not by the NFL itself. In the litigious world of American sport this entitles Dynamix to include the real-life names of all the players in all the teams in the NFL, but not to use the team 'nicknames.' The teams are called by their city names with an approximation of the real nickname, which is easily changed by the seriously sad into the correct one. CCF is licensed by the NFL Coaches

Club, and this seems to entitle MicroProse to use both the correct team names and logos and the player names. In the past we've seen, across various formats, that none of these endorsements are a guarantee of a quality product, though. The games were developed at different times, so many of the squads have different players in each game as players are dropped, traded or simply given a lethal injection (quite frequently in the NFL), depending on whether or not they successfully manage to perform the one play in the match they were hired for.



FRONT PAGE SPORTS FOOTBALL PRO

PC ZONE
specs

Minimum Memory: 2Mb

Minimum Processor: 386

Minimum Speed: 25MHz

Installation: Optional

Minimum Hard Disk: 8-9Mb

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Sound
Blaster Pro, Thunderboard, PAS 16,
Ad-Lib, Roland

Controls: Mouse, Joystick

PC ZONE
scoreThe best around, but
you'll need a high-
spec machine.

85

Price: £39.99 Out: Now

Published: Dynamix/Sierra

Telephone: 0734 303322



PS IS BY FAR THE BETTER of the two games, largely because it's by far the best American football game on the PC - but then the original was, too.

The improvements to the game have been largely cosmetic. More animation in the sprites has lessened the problem inherent in the original whereby a player would approach a tackle from one side and suddenly appear in another direction as the tackle was made and the appropriate frames of graphics introduced. The addition of NFLPA player names has done little more than save time for those who would otherwise spend days adding all the right ones manually. Although it mentions 'new options' on the box, it doesn't specify what they are. I can't spot them and neither can Douglas, the resident expert at Tottenham Court Road Computer Exchange.

The attention to detail is excellent throughout, and I'd need to virtually re-write the manual to detail it all here. For example, you can specify the weather conditions in an exhibition game in three different ways: precisely, by choosing the temperature, humidity, wind speed and cloud cover; generally, by the month of the year; or by the computer selecting conditions appropriate to the nearest city to the home team's stadium.

When you start looking into complex things like the play editor we're talking seriously 'deep.' You'll spend ages inventing more and more bizarre plays, probably without ever using them in games. Take into account player ratings in over 300 statistical categories, personalised game plans and play books, rosters and depth charts, drafting, trading and firing players over 'simulated years' and we're into Grand Canyon territory.

The manual is good, having clear tutorials for all aspects of the game, quickstart and troubleshooter sections, a quick reference card and a recommended reading list for those who wish to know more about NFL strategy. There's even a facility to print out your team's playbooks for quick visual reference. This is essential if you play in Advanced mode, in which plays aren't diagrammed on-screen thus foiling your opponent's attempt to spy, but also taxing your memory (and your DOS filename powers of invention: try describing four slightly varying running plays with eight letters and you'll see what I mean).

The graphics are crisp, the way plays are selected is okay and the sound is good. Playability has been improved, although it still doesn't quite have the immediacy of the best console games. On the down-side it's memory-hungry (because of the animation) and still slightly jerky, even on a 486/33. On anything less than a 386/25 you can forget it.

It's pretty good as a two-player game and has unrivalled long-term play supplied by the Career mode. The best currently available.



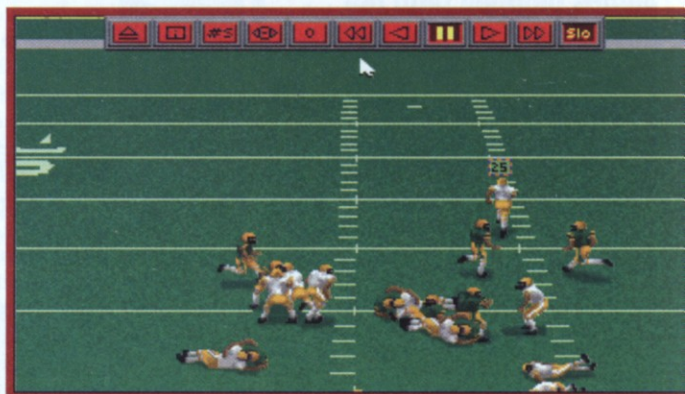
Front Page Sports Football Pro allows you to adjust camera angles to your heart's content.



Why, it's just like being at the game: 'What the hell's happening? Where's my portable TV?'



Catching the ball while two defenders smash their helmets into your ribs isn't a good idea.



The man they call 'Number 25' weaves his way through the dead and dying to score again.



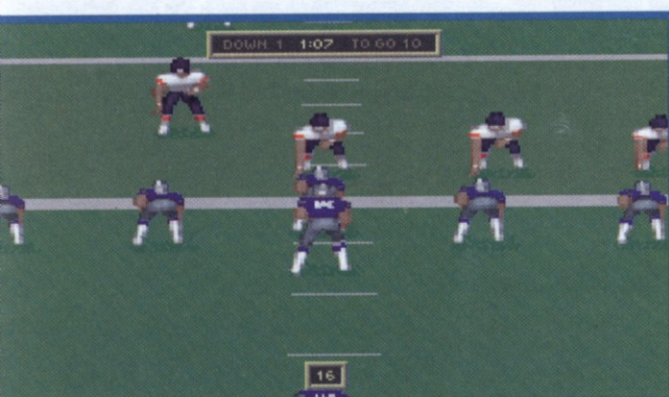
NFL COACHES CLUB FOOTBALL



men on drugs do their best to imitate the dancing from Seven Brides For Seven Brothers.



Annual Conference of Spinal Curvature Sufferers Anonymous gets off to a fine start.



n cured! Ha ha! I'm cured! shouted Barry (left), his symptoms suddenly in remission.



nnoyed at his smugness, his erstwhile fellow-sufferers decided to teach him a lesson.



OACHES CLUB FOOTBALL has obviously taken a long, hard look at the other games around and tried to pick and choose between them for its various facilities. It has a

good play editor, for example, that rivals *FPS*'s for complexity. Although it has a season option, it doesn't have a career option. It has a veritable multitude of in-game views – everything from ground level views, quarterback and defensive captain views to blimp views – but unfortunately the passing procedure renders most of them useless for playing the game itself. Up to two views can also be adjusted (rotated, raised and lowered) and saved for your own special use.

The graphics, generally, aren't as good as *FPS*'s: the players look like mannequins or those naff wooden artist's drawing figures, rather than real footballers. Especially on close-ups like the fully-animated coin toss. Why the hell games companies think anyone's interested in watching that is beyond me. There's one in *FPS*, too. What a waste of programming time. It's about as enthralling as an animated view of the teams having a half-time cup of tea and a biscuit (or in American football games, a half-time tub of anabolic steroids and a line of speed).

Anyway, the game falls down in one or two areas: the lack of customisable teams, for instance. Because of the licensing agreement team names and divisions are hallowed and can't be fiddled with. The NFL won't have their pride and joy being renamed the Northampton Nob-Ends and playing in the Winkystink Conference. Players can be edited, however, and given whatever superhuman stats you want them to have.

Gameplay is the other area in which the game doesn't quite gel: running plays are alright with a joystick, but passing plays aren't. Passing plays are best with a mouse but running is a nightmare.

Most irritating is the huge flaw in the play-selection display: only one is seen at a time. To select plays quickly during a game you need to build up a mental picture both of the play itself, its relation to other plays and its location in the playbook. Only having one on-screen at a time makes this very difficult. Every team's set of 80 is different, there's no way of printing them all out and the manual won't be listing them all. This is very poor. To cap it all, it makes it rather obvious in a two-player game which play you've chosen. Sigh.

It's not all bad, though. On the positive side, *CCF* is one of the few games to allow you to access and edit your plays during a game. It also has a fatigue factor, in which players tire during a game, and which allows you to replace them as you see fit. The game itself also takes up less hard disk space, is less memory-hungry and might suit those who don't want to get quite so involved with the minutiae of the game.

PC ZONE score

A good attempt that's let down by the rather poor passing system

70

Price: £44.99 Out: Now
Published: MicroProse
Telephone: 0454 326 532

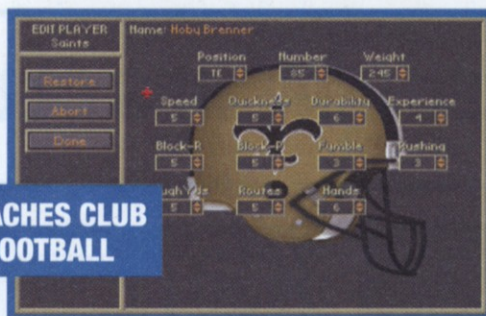
PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 2Mb RAM
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 12MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 5-7Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Pro Audio Spectrum, Roland, General Midi and compatibles.
Controls: Keyboard, Joystick, Mouse

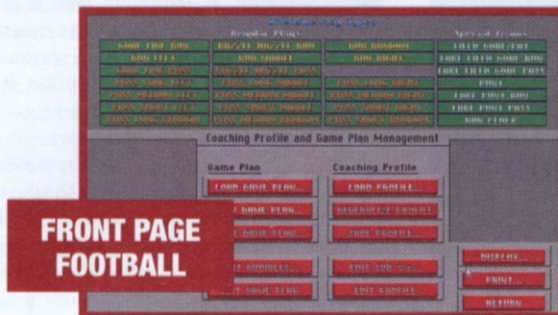




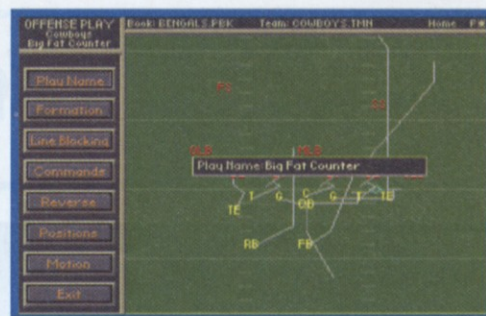
COACHES CLUB FOOTBALL



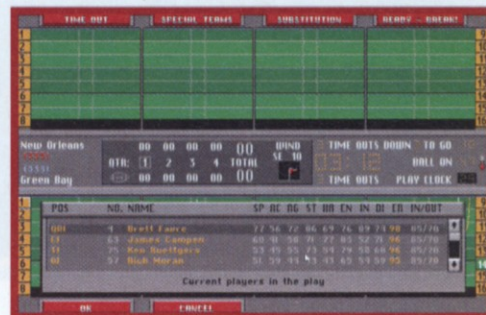
Learn more about people than you really want to know...



If it isn't the Coaching Profile and Game Plan Management bit.



...then think of complicated ways to get them injured.



The visually stunning playbook/depth chart malarkey.

PLAYS AND PLAYBOOKS

Most American football plays fall into one of five basic areas: running plays going through the middle of the offensive line; running plays around the outside of the line; and short, medium and long passes covering around five, ten and 20 yards downfield respectively.

It's not as limited as it sounds, though: there are eight places in the line a play could be run to, thousands of different pass routes a receiver could take from any situation, different players could carry the ball, and so on.

There are certain accepted generalisations. Running the ball is a safer option than passing, although it yields fewer yards on average. There used to be a real-man, 'run the ball up the middle' tradition that went something like: first down is a running play, second down is another running play, third down is a pass if the required yardage is too great to achieve with another running play. Nowadays this isn't really the case. Teams like San Francisco pass whenever they feel like it and other 'run and shoot' teams, like Detroit and Houston, keep four wide receivers on the field at all times and leave the quarterback permanently in the shotgun position (dropped back before the snap, ready to pass). They're all sissies, though. The real men teams still establish a good running game first. No 'run and shoot' team has ever won the Super Bowl.

Your team has to be able to run and pass and your playbook must reflect this. If you never run the ball, teams will drop back and wait to intercept your passes, while pressurising your quarterback into errors. If you never pass the ball, they'll pack the line with meaty run-stoppers and leave you nowhere to go. The trick is to balance everything out, and hopefully trick the defence into thinking you're doing something you're not. That's when it gets interesting. There are draw plays that look like a pass but are actually a run and others – play action passes – that look like a run but are really passes. There are misdirection plays, influence blocking plays and downright silly plays. The play editors in both these games are very extensive, and should allow you to do just about anything you want. (Although the FPS one doesn't allow you to replace a wide-receiver or tight end with a guard or tackle for those megaforce running plays, which is very disappointing.)

TEAM PLAYBOOK CHARACTERISTICS

Both games make an attempt to provide each team with a different feel, reflecting the real-life counterpart, and both have a coaching profile which affects computer decisions in different situations. FPS's coaching profile is far more in-depth than CCF's.

FRONT PAGE FOOTBALL

FPS has a central bank of over 200 stock plays, which appear in various combinations among the

teams. For example, the real Washington Redskins' offence has a lot of movement before the ball's snapped: the receivers and running backs line up in one formation, then jump up and run into another formation just before the snap, in an attempt to confuse or mislead the defence. This has been faithfully reproduced here – a lot of the Washington plays do just that. You can add any number of your own plays to the central core, and adopt any 64 for a particular game or game plan.

COACHES CLUB FOOTBALL

There is no central bank of plays in CCF. Instead, each team has their own selection of plays in a playbook, which

can be copied, deleted, and edited within the book itself, but which cannot be saved anywhere except in the playbook. Each team has 80 – count 'em – offensive and 80 defensive plays; more than enough to get in there and fiddle about with a few without spoiling too much. There's been some effort made to match the type of plays available to the teams, but it will take you a long time to get to know what the differences are because of the way they're displayed. (See main review.)

BOYS DON'T MAKE PASSES...

How a game approaches passing is often the point where an American football simulation stands or falls. These two approach it in very different ways.

COACHES CLUB FOOTBALL

The ball is snapped, the quarterback drops back and a press of the button brings up a target cursor on-screen,

which you control. Judging the speed and direction of your receivers, you lead the pass by placing the target cursor in front of them and hitting the fire button again.

It's not a new system – in fact it's been around since the very first version of John Madden football on the PC – and it's not the easiest to use. Aiming is quite difficult with the joystick; there's an inertia/acceleration effect which makes its progress across the screen less than smooth. A mouse is ideal for this kind of quick movement, of course, but it's also lousy for running plays, so you'll have to get used to the joystick. Since there are no zoom windows for receivers, it works best from a zoomed-out view of the field, although seeing the players in miniature reduces the atmosphere of the game somewhat, and makes the many views suitable only for replays.

FRONT PAGE FOOTBALL

A more standard approach to the display (receivers pop up in zoomed-in windows), with an allocated order of

receivers on every play. Each press of the button calls up a different receiver, as the quarterback checks to see if they're open, in the order first, then second, then first, then third, then first receiver again (up to ten checks, going through everyone on field) before finally throwing the ball away at the tenth in desperation. This check-off system accurately reflects real life, but takes an awful lot longer, needs fire buttons in perfect condition and would entail a drop back of approximately 85 yards to achieve without the death of your quarterback. I'd prefer to see three or four receivers in windows simultaneously.

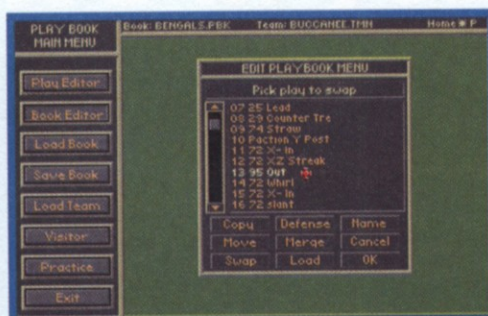
There are two ways of throwing the pass: holding the button down floats the ball and a quick press zips it.



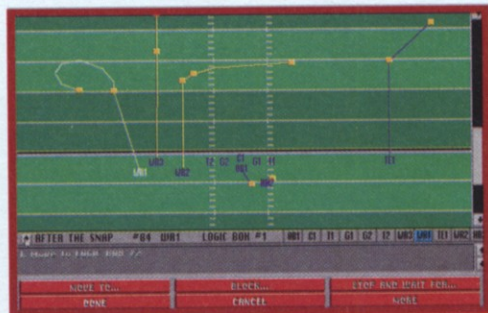
Can you think of any more offensive positions, children?



As you can see, DOS names are ideal for distinguishing plays.



There's an absolutely brilliant play hidden under that box.



You want infinite complexity? FPS Pro is the one for you.

SEASONAL PLAY AND GAMEPLAY

Both games allow you to play the expected one-off exhibition games and they both let you play out full seasons, battle your way into the playoffs and make one final sacrifice for the Gipper in the end of season championship game.

If you're playing through a season, both games also have the computer-simulated games that you're not directly involved in. *FPS* has two different ways of doing this, *CCF* one. They are, in decreasing order of time wasted:

THOSE WAYS TO PLAY IN FULL

COACHES CLUB FOOTBALL

MicroProse have given you the option of playing the game simply as a coach, with the computer simply carrying out your orders, or as a player as well. Either way, there are two levels of difficulty. Being licensed by the NFL, it isn't possible to change the names of teams or to create customised leagues comprised of a different number of teams than the real thing. Once you've finished a season, that's it. You start again.

FRONT PAGE FOOTBALL

Has three levels of difficulty for both the play-calling and for the playing, and the same for computer or human opponents, allowing a good range of difficulty. There are coaching and coaching/playing options, password facilities and the players, teams and leagues can all be customised to your heart's content. There's also a career mode: at the end of a season you can carry on into the next one. Players will age, new players can be drafted and old ones can be traded. There's even a summer training camp which can increase your players' skill ratings.

Full Simulation

Generates and resolves individual plays (!) for all

games, controls all players, saves highlights for you to view later at any point and generates and saves statistics – all in the approximate time it takes to dash off two chapters of your semi-autobiographical novel.

COACHES CLUB FOOTBALL

Simulation

Does it rather more quickly, but obviously not as

thoroughly, although it still generates team and player statistics. There are options to play any game yourself. Highlight 'films' can't be viewed after the end of that week's games. All done in the time it takes to prepare and cook a stir-fried meal.

FRONT PAGE FOOTBALL

Fast Simulation

This generates realistic scores, but not stats or

highlights and only takes a few seconds to play – the week's games are completed in the time it takes to de-flea the cat with a sturdy comb and fashion a miniature Barbara Hepworth from the detritus. Well, a bit quicker actually.



ALTERNATIVES

Joe Montana Football

I remember this game with the nearest I ever get to fond affection, having spent many a dark winter evening playing it. It has a full-season option – using fictional but recognisable players and teams (all fully customisable) – a reasonable play-editor and smallish but quite well-animated sprites. It also has action replay and the option to save selected highlights forever. It uses the same team editing and statistical screens as Accolade's *Hardball III* and plays pretty well. Sound isn't



great, but it's recommended for those with low-spec PCs.

Publisher: US Gold

Mike Ditka's Ultimate Football

Similar to *Joe Montana*, but with the facility to watch and play the game from the four different sides of the pitch. It's a little jerky on slower PCs, but has all the usual playing options, 256 colour VGA graphics, and good gameplay. Also has instant replay, digitised speech from umpires, four passing modes and the option to have user-



controlled or computer-assisted wide receivers.

Publisher: Accolade

John Madden Football

Rather aged, hence the primitive graphics, PC-speaker sound and tiny sprites, but possessing a play-editor that gives you absolute freedom to do whatever you want. Pioneered the use of the target cursor for passing, now used by *CCF*. Doesn't stand the test of time, and only plays single games. Not to be confused with the good



Amiga or outstanding Megadrive games of the same name.

Publisher: Electronic Arts

Tom Landry Strategic Football

Long serving ex-Dallas coach Tom Landry gives his name to this coaching-only game. Graphics are less clear and jerkier than *Joe Montana*, the playbook facilities are extensive but sooner or later you're going to want a bit more hands-on excitement. Given that most other games can be



played in coaching-only mode, this is a bit too limited.

Publisher: Merit Software

John Madden Football, JMF '92, JMF '93 (Megadrive)

If you want the best arcade American football game, this is the one to get. No play-editor, but loads of plays. No season option, just exhibition games and playoffs. Brilliant nonetheless. Intuitive controls let you do almost anything: ball carriers can charge, spin, dive and jump; tacklers can crash-tackle, clothesline, strip the ball, dive and jump; quarterbacks can vary the power of their pass. It's smooth, fast and has the best two-player game ever. With the '94 version coming soon, these carts can be picked up second hand



for about £15.00. What are you waiting for?

Publisher: Electronic Arts



The computer is the perfect umpire - here it shows planned movement, fire missions, the lot...

V For Victory 4

GOLD-JUNO-SWORD



ANY SEASONED WWII wargamer will know what Gold, Juno and Sword are. They're the codenames for the beaches in Normandy where the British and Canadian troops

landed on D-Day, 6th June 1944. They're also the subject of the fourth game in the excellent V For Victory series from Three-Sixty Pacific. While there are only a few minor improvements in the interface and game system, the Normandy scenario is completely different in

flavour to the earlier ones, with the possible exception of the first game, Utah Beach, which dealt with the US invasion beaches.

The game starts on D+1, the day after the initial landings. The amphibious invasion itself was a set piece action with little room for manoeuvre. On D+1 the whole of France stretches before you - if you can squeeze your massed armour and infantry past the eight German Panzer divisions and the other assorted units waiting just behind Hitler's Atlantic Wall.

The game comes on a single disk with a quick-start manual and thicker 130 page reference manual, both to a high standard. Troubleshooting is well covered in a small technical supplement dealing mainly with memory problems (V For Victory can be awkward to set up). There is also a

superb full-colour wall chart detailing the movement costs for each unit, terrain effects and a glossary of unit symbols underneath a large map of the entire playing area.

Seven scenarios are provided as well as the campaign game and there are several features designed to add interest; e.g. hidden German units.

The game simulates the 'traditional' hex style wargame. There are close up and overall views of the battlefield and each unit has dozens of operational choices from probes to all-out attack or digging in. It's the kind of flexibility that would be next to impossible in a board game.

Clearly, with the sea behind you your backside is against the wall, so to speak, and the options are slightly less than in the Velikye Luki or Arnhem scenarios in terms of flanking and encircling movements. While this is totally realistic it doesn't make for thrills and spills. In fact the realism can be an obstacle to enjoyment. Normandy was a vicious slugging match fought mainly on a tactical level between small units fighting at close quarters in hedgerows and sunken lanes. The only strategy you are faced with as commander of the Allied forces is to batter a way through the German line although several of the scenarios are a little more entertaining, with a little more flexibility.

Gold Juno Sword is undoubtedly an excellent wargame released with sound strategic sense - the 50th anniversary of D-Day is only months away - but it doesn't quite have the appeal of earlier games in the series. **Z**

Bored with the ferry and sick of waiting for the Chunnel, Andrew Wright leaps into his landing craft and heads for Normandy.

PC ZONE score

It's still the best computer wargames system but it needs a shot in the arm... or leg... or both even.

78

Price: £34.99 Out: Now
Published: Three-Sixty Pacific
(Electronic Arts) Tel: 0753 549442

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 3Mb
Minimum Processor: 386SX
Minimum Speed: 16MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 5Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
(512K Vesa compatible)
Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib,
PC speaker
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse



(Above) It might have been Quicker via Calais and Better by Boulogne but the 1944 ferry routes all seem to go to Caen. Better beaches I suppose.
... you don't even need the dice any more.

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**"Possibly the
best racing game
on the Amiga"**

Amiga Action magazine

**"It'll establish itself
as the top down
racer of the '90s"**

The One magazine

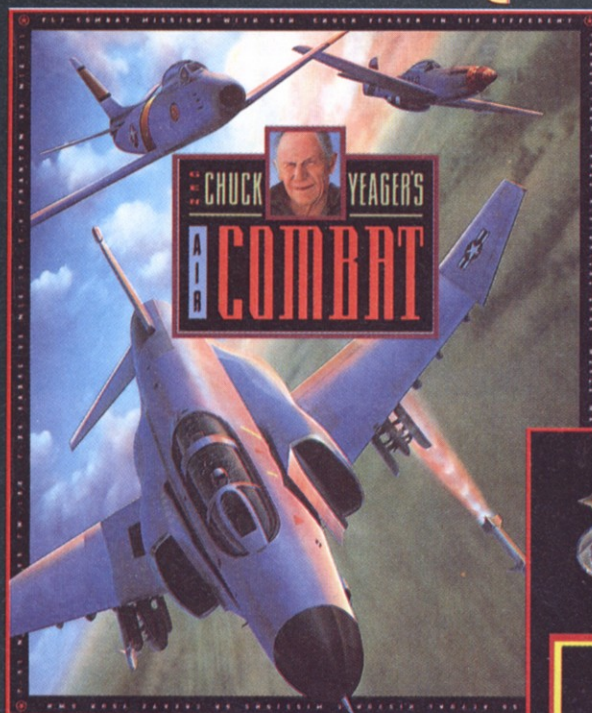
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1 4 . 9 9



You're a starfighter pilot, the best of the best, but nothing in your training prepared you for action this hot.

* See the action from all angles using Wing Commander's player-controlled camera.

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super atmosphere...it'll blow your mind".

RAZE - 93%

"One of the finest games of all time".

AMIGA ACTION

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1 4 . 9 9

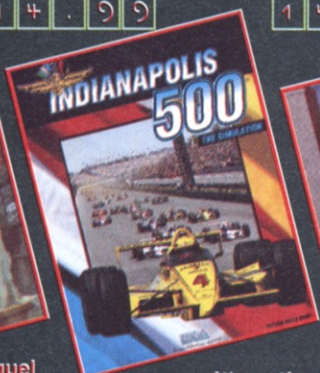


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Sequel to the award-winning fantasy role-playing game from Mindcraft.

At the other end of the world, far across the sea of Oshmar, lies the dire continent of Gurtex, where the Children of Light are preparing a campaign against the growing Forces of Darkness. But the vile Leaders of Darkness have trapped the lost guardians of the Magic Candle in evil candles of their own.

- * Assign tasks to your companions while you and the rest of your party continue on the adventure.
- * Intelligent conversation with non-player characters who have independent personalities.
- * Automatic mapping and note-taking.

"An excellent example of a true roleplaying game".

-PC REVIEW

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- ZERO HERO 92%

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- * Stunning full colour graphics and vivid animations.
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"Excellent gameplay, well designed".

- PC REVIEW

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Size isn't everything in Street Fighter II.

EVER STOOD in front of a mirror and performed that classic karate move; the reverse punch? The one where you start with one arm outstretched, the other resting on your hip and then, with an explosion of power, you thrust your back fist forward while withdrawing the other to your waist. If you grew up in the '70s you probably have. While boys in the mid-'80s ran around firing a barrage of bullets from imaginary Uzis at invisible foes à la Arnie, Sly, Dolph, the '70s child's imaginary fight scenario was altogether different. Finding himself surrounded by muscle-bound hoodlums, the preferred method of escape was to leap 40 feet into the air, shout something like 'Hiiii-Chaii' at the top of his voice and rotate by 360 degrees with an outstretched leg taking the heads off all and sundry. This was the time when kids turned up to metalwork class with the express purpose of making *Kung Fu* throwing stars. This was the golden era of martial arts.

In the caring '90s, children's penchant for action movies and games has come under fire from child psychologists who link the growth in violent crime perpetrated by adolescents to a youthful diet of violent film and video games. This debate has been fuelled recently by the complaints over the release of *Mortal Kombat*, a vicious beat 'em-up where, amongst other things, you can rip the heads off your victims and expose all manner of squidgy

internal piping. So what better time for us Gold to bring the black belt of all karate bruisers, *Street Fighter II*, to the PC.

Everybody was Kung Fu fighting

Street Fighter II is the definitive in your face, kicking, slashing, slapping, spinning, fingers up nostrils, knee caps knocked down legs fight game. As with any *Kung Fu* film, it needs a plot to put the violence in some context. Eight of the world's meanest nut jobs have entered a duffin' up tournament to win

'For those of us who dream of walking with an arrogant swagger through the most dangerous urban jungle...'

the chance to take on the baddest dudes ever – the Grand Masters. Why would they want to do this? Because each of these ne'er do wells has a desperate personality disorder that has alienated them from society and left them with a desire to beat the shit out of anything that gets in their way. Complex? Nah. But it's action we want.

And action is what we get

You choose one of eight characters and, playing in one player mode, travel the world jobbing the other computer-controlled seven on their home turf.

Matches are fought over the best of three bouts; if you win, points are awarded according to how quickly you mashed your foe and how few times you took a pounding yourself. Once the seven fighters have been humiliated, you move on to the four Grand Masters and tot up that high score.

Just for kicks

With an average of about 20 different moves per character, frantic wobbling of the joystick and mental button slapping will win most bouts at the easiest levels, but at higher levels a true mastery of your character's abilities is required. This means perfecting the 'special moves' that will cause your opponents obscene amounts of GBH. All characters can perform the karate staple of forward flips, roundhouse kicks, chops and so on but each has a few moves, like Hurricane Kick, Sumo Head Butt and Yoga Flame, that will take the concentration of a buddhist to pull off on your joystick or keyboard.

And here lies the problem with *Street Fighter's* move from the NES to the PC. Keyboards aren't much cop for a game of this intensity: four bouts and you're virtually arthritic. A joystick is fine for simple operations, but you really need a two button affair to handle some of the special moves, and the calibration on these things is always awkward, so you spend ages attempting a combination of four different movements which results merely in a poxy backward flip. A joypad is the answer, but not that many PC owners have one.

Street Fighter II

MOVERS AND SHAKERS

If you are going to pit yourself against the toughest street fighters on the planet the stock-in-trade left jab and upper cut is just not gonna cut the ice. Luckily, all the fighters in Street Fighter II have at least a couple of aces up their kimono.



RYU: Cool and calculating, Ryu is a victim only to fashion. With bandana and fingerless gloves firmly in place he can summon up a fireball. His other special moves include the Dragon Punch and Hurricane Kick.



KEN: There's always one and Ken is it. Boring name, dodgy blonde mop and all the same moves as Ryu – don't bother to play him.

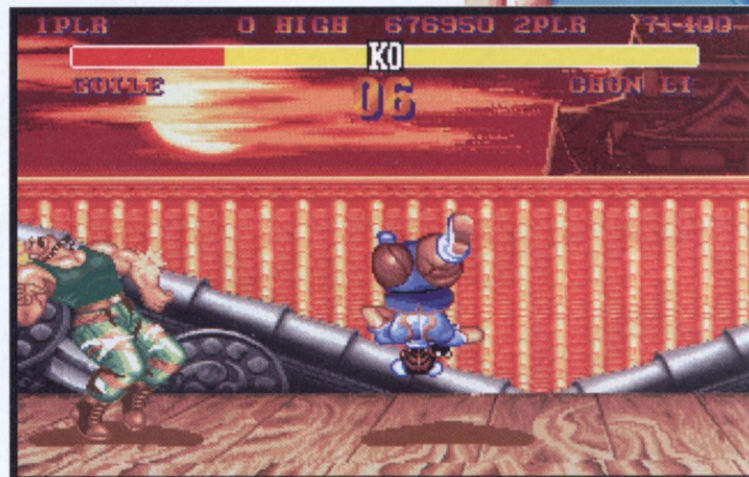


EDMOND HONDA:

More of a Range Rover than a Honda, Ed can somehow propel his obesity through the air to carry off the Sumo Head Butt.



CHUN LI: Just to show street fighting's not just for boys, Chun Li pulls out the Whirlwind Kick.





BLANKA: Blanka's pre-match diet consists of bowls of Electric Jellyed Eels. These then give him the necessary charge for his Lightbulb move.



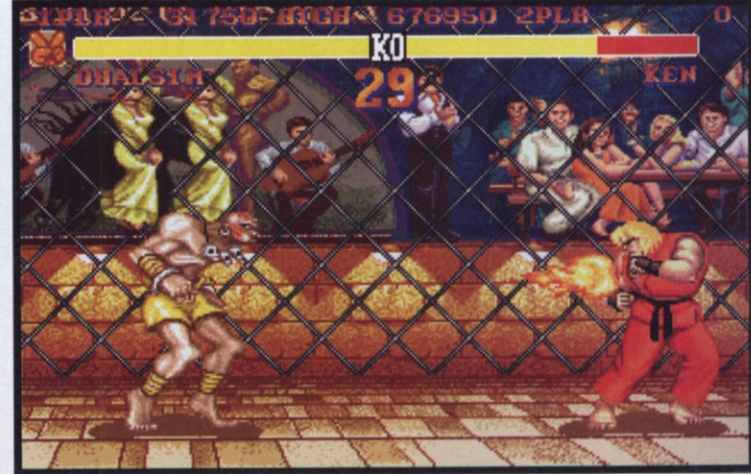
ZANGRIEF: Nasty big Russian geezer with the ponciest special move going – this one's called the Spinning Clothesline. 'Nuff said.



GUILE: Vietnam vet type character, Guile has been taking LSD for President and Country for many years now. Special moves include the Sonic Boom (shown here) and the FlashBack Kick (which clouds his adversaries brain with funny squidgy faces and beautiful deep colours).



DHALISM: Top fighters recommend him. Play *Street Fighter* with a friend and there's always an argument over who's going to be Dhalism. So nifty he hardly needs special moves (what with the Mr Fantastic leg extensions and all) but what the hell, try out his Yoga Flame.



THE UNDEFINITIVE GUIDE TO KUNG FU CULTURE

In the 1970's everyone went Kung Fu crazy. In the West it really all started off with Bruce Lee. Unfortunately, usurped by Hollywood and played to death, Kung Fu's mass appeal was fleeting, but it is now entering a bit of a renaissance with a host of new Kung Fu-style films (check out John Woo's crop) and games. In deference to the cult of Kung Fu the following is a totally non-comprehensive list of some Kung Fu landmarks that shows from where *Street Fighter's* pedigree has evolved.

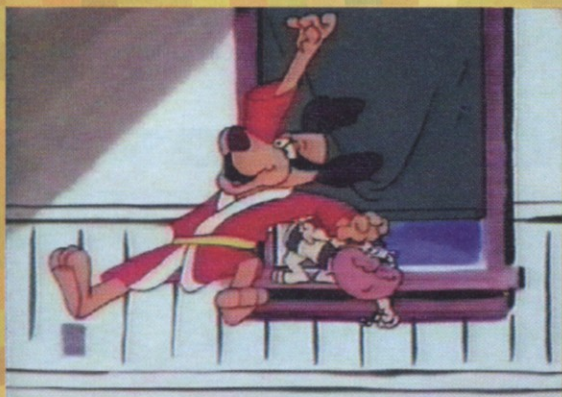
CHOP SOCKY: The term used to describe the original all-action Kung Fu movies that came out of Hong Kong studios in the early 1970's. Defining elements of pure chop socky are unrelenting violence, sub-titles, bone crunching 'Kerracks' and 'Thwacks' dubbed over the top and grown men leaping 40 feet into the air.



ENTER THE DRAGON: Lee's most well known film in the West because it was made in Hollywood, and heralded the beginning of the American attempt to pillage the chop socky formula. Still a classic Lee showboat for showing off his washboard chest.

KUNG FU: Ahh! Grasshopper. Whenever David Carradine adorned our TV screens, it was always with great anticipation that you would wait to see how many times the bad guy had to call him 'Chink', spit in his face, stamp on his hat and beat up old women before Dave would come out of his contemplative mood and kick the crap out of him.

HONG KONG PHOOEY: And then Hanna-Barbera created Penry Pooch (aka Hong Kong Phooey): Number One Super Guy. Phooey had style and brought it into our homes at 4.30pm on weekdays. A bit of a bungler, his snickering sidekick, Spot the cat, always pulled him through. Classic cartoon Fu your mum couldn't stop you watching.



AND NEVER FORGET: *Monkey* (Hahh Mon-kay! Pigsy! - pure magic); *Water Margin*; Chuck Norris (world karate champ and dire actor); Jackie Chan's amazing stunts; *Marvel Comics'* sultry Shang-Chi, Son of Fu Manchu, and mysterious Iron Fist; *Kung Fu Fighting* by Carl Douglas.



Job your mate

Taking on the computer is necessary to build up skill and mastery of the martial arts. Regardless of all that pap about karate experts being pacifists and only using their skills to channel their physical and mental energies to reach a higher plane of consciousness, it's no use being an expert unless you can use your art against a human opponent. So two player mode is the best and most fun option. Players can fight as any one of the eight main characters, and a handicap function allows you to adjust the damage inflicted by punches and kicks, so you can play completely inept friends and not get bored.

The backdrop to the brawls can be chosen from ten different settings - the best one being Las Vegas, where all the onlookers look like Starsky's pal Huggy Bear. Sadly, the background is purely decorative, offering no movement or jeering from the crowds. The sound effects are also poor, digitised beeps that make you feel like a Morse code operator. These games need 'Argghhs' and 'Urghhs' from the competitors, and shouts of 'Go on 'im' and 'Let's 'ave it then' from the crowd.

As far as mindless violence, addictive gameplay and stunning graphics go, *Street Fighter II* is the genuine article (and though not a masterpiece like the SNES version, it's a good representation if you can get hold of a joypad). And we won't be seeing *Mortal Kombat* on PC for some time. But who needs all that gore anyway; *Street Fighter II* won't have you swimming in claret and there's no sense of fatality. You can pile driver someone's head into the concrete, launch both knees into their solar plexus, and finish them off with a deft head stomp, but once the fight's over all your opponent will have is a bloody nose.

A game for those of us who dream of walking with an arrogant swagger through the most dangerous urban jungle, in the knowledge that a deft reverse punch and roundhouse kick would put any assailant out for the count. So it's really a game to let us wimps bravely take on merciless killers, and when the going gets tough, just 'Quit to dos' and go to bed. ☒



PC ZONE score

Addictive and violent but the cross over to the PC hindered unless you invest in a game pad.

81

Price: £29.99 Out: Now
Published: US Gold
Telephone: 021 625 3388

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 2Mb
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 25MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 5Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib Roland and compatibles
Controls: Joystick, Keyboard, Joypad
Comments: 386 recommended

(Top) Protect your car against car thieves - hire this guy to stand beside it all day.
(Below) Now, do you tilt your head forwards or backwards? Are you supposed to suppress the bleeding or let it flow? I can never remember what to do with bleeding noses.

IN PERSPECTIVE

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WILL THE REAL MR RIPPER...

The Ripper murders caused a sensation in their own time and have continued to do so for more than a hundred years. The release of the supposed diaries of Jack the Ripper may not reveal anything new about the case, but do reveal that there is still an appetite for information on one of Britain's great unsolved crimes.

The Ripper murders maintain a hold on the imagination because they remain unsolved, because of their brutality and because of the short period of time in which they were committed. It is this last fact that has fed so many of the conspiracy theories; the Ripper committed five murders between 31 August and 9 November 1888 then stopped. Was this the work of a madman or someone with a very definite, very sane purpose?

There is no space here to summarise the range of suspects advanced by criminologists. However, one of the strongest is that put forward by Stephen Knight in his book *Jack The Ripper: The Final Solution* (and summarised in the film *Murder By Decree* starring James Mason and Christopher

Plummer). In brief the theory runs as follows: the Heir Apparent, Prince Albert Edward (Eddy), spent a lot of time with the artist Sickert in his flat in Cleveland Street. At the corner of

Murder By Decree also links the Ripper with Royalty.

the street was a tobacconist where Annie Crook lived. Despite the fact that she was not only of the wrong class, but also the wrong religion (Catholic) to marry the future king, Prince Eddy married Annie in secret and she had a child by him. The initial reaction of the establishment upon discovering this was to seize Annie and have her locked away in an asylum. However, before being seized Annie apparently told her story to a number of friends and there appears to have been an attempt to blackmail the authorities. The murders, argues Knight, were a misguided but highly successful attempt to silence the blackmailers and he identifies Royal Physician Sir William Gull and a certain John

Nettley as prime suspects. The story was, in fact, originally told by Sickert to his son and there are claims that Sickert painted clues to the theory in his paintings. It is impossible to even begin to summarise the evidence, albeit largely circumstantial, that Knight has uncovered to support Sickert's theory. Even if he fails to prove it, he does unearth a collection of very suspicious actions and inactions on the side of the authorities. For example, why was the investigation scaled down on the day after the last murder? Did someone know that there weren't going to be any more?

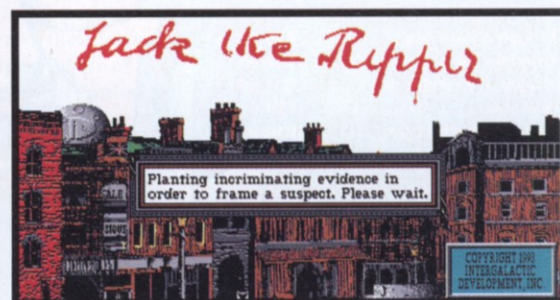
Freemasons

One of the most investigated of secret societies, and one that inspires (depending on your outlook) much suspicion or paranoia, the Masons date from the guilds of the Middle Ages, though they claim descent from the builders of Solomon's temple. Their connection with the Ripper case is largely circumstantial, inasmuch as a large number of senior members of the police and government were (and indeed still are) Masons. Much has been made of the oath of the higher degrees of Masons to protect brother Masons no matter what they have done, 'murder and treason not excepted'.

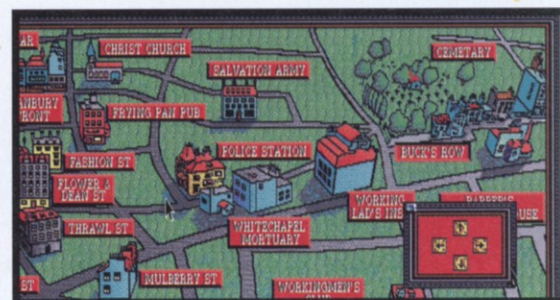
Among the more direct connections between Jack the Ripper and Freemasonry were the extreme similarity of the mutilation of the victims' bodies with elements of Masonic ritual and allegory. Perhaps more intriguing is the writing on a wall above the blood-soaked cloth from one of the victims' aprons. The words written were 'The Juwes are the men that will not be blamed for nothing'. On hearing of the discovery, Sir Charles Warren, Commissioner of the Metropolitan Police for almost exactly the duration of the Ripper murders and one of the country's senior Freemasons, hurried to the scene and forbade police photographers to take pictures of this vital clue which he washed away. He later claimed that he feared the writing might inspire anti-semitic riots. However, the Juwes were not the Jews but Jubela, Jubelo and Jubelum who, in Masonic mythology murdered the Grand Master Hiram Abiff, in charge of the building of Solomon's Temple.

See? The EGA graphics ensure the absence of gratuitous shots of mutilated women.

Jack



The title screen. A fine example of tasteful, non-exploitative design.



Landan. Ve Smoke. I've always thought it was bigger.

We gave *Jack the Ripper* straight to Patrick McCarthy, secure in the knowledge that he's the only one insensitive enough to make a joke about the subject matter in his introduction.

IN AN INDUSTRY WHERE WARS are seen only as the ideal advertisement for the next flight simulation, it's perhaps unsurprising that atrocious murders by serial killers are seen as a good starting point for detective games. Presumably this is considered a safe thing to do because of the distancing effect of the time that has elapsed since the events took place. If this is the case, I wonder at what point in the future it will become acceptable to have games based on the crimes of the Yorkshire Ripper?

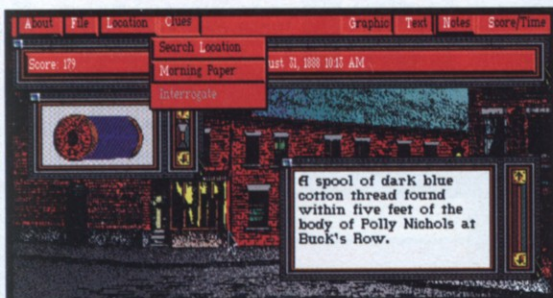
As I was loading the game, someone walked past and was openly critical to see a game based on Jack the Ripper, and I felt somewhat embarrassed and disinclined to stick up for it. The game's designers claim that they have avoided sensationalising or glorifying the crimes but the title screen, with its blood dripping down from the lettering, somewhat puts the lie to that claim. Would a game based on the tracking down of a Nazi concentration camp guard be seen as acceptable if it was called 'Ivan The Terrible' and had trails of smoke rising from the lettering?

Anyway, thrusting my sad, old, trendy, lefty, guilty conscience hat type thing back into the cupboard and whipping out my amoral gamesplayer hat, let's get onto

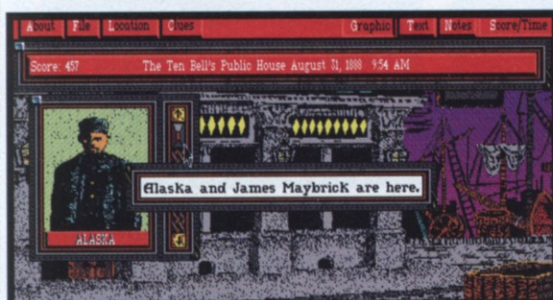


Murder By Decree also links the Ripper with Royalty.

The Ripper



The spool - as played by Stephanie Beacham in the mini-series.



There's somewhere else I've always thought was bigger, too.

the game itself. It's played by utilising a primitive windowing system. Typically, a background graphic of the scene of the crime is superimposed with a description of your location and a list of the characters who are currently at the scene. A small box at the top (which can be toggled on and off) shows your current location and the date and time; the idea being that your investigations are taking place within a real game-time, which ticks by as you pursue the criminal. More of that later. The basis of the game involves you questioning each character, taking notes as you see fit, searching the area and moving on to whatever other location seems appropriate to your investigation.

Dressing up

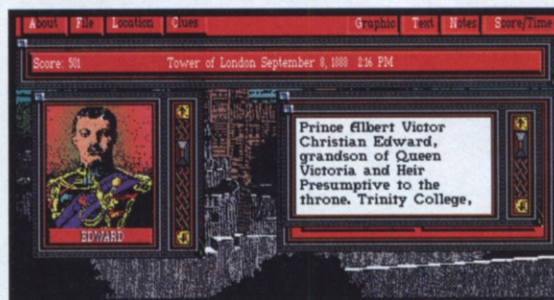
There's a map of the East End of London with several locations to visit; each location will take a certain amount of time to reach (which you can ascertain in advance), and which is visited by double clicking on its name. Once you feel you've gathered some significant evidence you can dash back to your study, dress up as Sherlock Holmes and work on solving the case by comparing statements and evidence to telling effect.

East End characters

That's the theory; in practice the game has a rather high crap quotient and is let down in several areas. For example, you 'interrogate' characters by moving a slider bar down the window in which their pictures are contained, then reading the text of the information they divulge in another window. There's really no interaction whatsoever. No matter how many times you meet the



I hate cemeteries. But then I'm not a brass-rubber.



Not to mention accredited inventor of unusual body piercing.

character on your travels, you only ever get the same information. Characters are initially in alphabetical order, but as others come and go they can become mixed up making things unnecessarily confusing.

You 'take notes' by shift clicking on the relevant text which is then automatically entered into your notebook under a name of your own devising. It's not a very good system. You can only take one sentence at a time and can't click on whole chunks of evidence to save entries, so you end up with hundreds of notes. Each has to have a separate name, and the space for naming the text isn't that long (despite the fact that the window displaying the names is twice their width), calling for much inventiveness in your naming conventions.

It doesn't help that when you come to view these notes in the comfort of your study, you can only view their names two at a time. There's no real way of organising them or filing them according to different murders - just an endless list presented in twos. Since the game revolves around building evidence by examining these facts in pairs on your blackboard, much time is wasted scrolling through them, one at a time, to find the two you want.

Bum steering

On the hardest level of difficulty you can click on most (but not all) information presented to you, but on the easy or normal settings it's impossible to click on text that the computer knows isn't relevant. This narrows down your margin for error and makes you feel 'steered' towards a conclusion. Admittedly it's nothing like *Return Of The Phantom* in this respect, but the easier settings do have that feel. **E3**

'...they didn't want the pictures of the bodies to be too shocking.'

Loveable Cockneys

If nothing else, the factual information that comes with the game is useful for brushing up your knowledge of the murders without having to buy one of those trashy, sensationalist books from the back of train station book shops. The game is chocka with all yer actual latter day EastEnders, appleing and pearing and plates-of-meating their way around as you try desperately to gain a little sense from what they idiotically believe to be their indecipherable banter. (Actually they don't use it at all. Ed.) Some of the more notable ones include:

ANNIE ELIZABETH CROOK



Annie Crook may well have been the secret wife of Prince Albert Victor (as opposed to Prince Albert Edward, the

man who popularised the body modification) and might even have given birth to his illegitimate son. She may have been involved in the Cleveland Street homosexual brothel scandal, and later died in a lunatic ward at a workhouse, although many suspect that she was not so much insane as an inconvenience.

MONTAGUE DRUITT



A Winchester and Oxford man, teacher and lawyer, Drutt was Sir Melville Macnaghten's prime suspect. He was

sacked from his teaching job in peculiar circumstances, and later found dead in the Thames with rather more rocks in his pockets than he'd have liked.

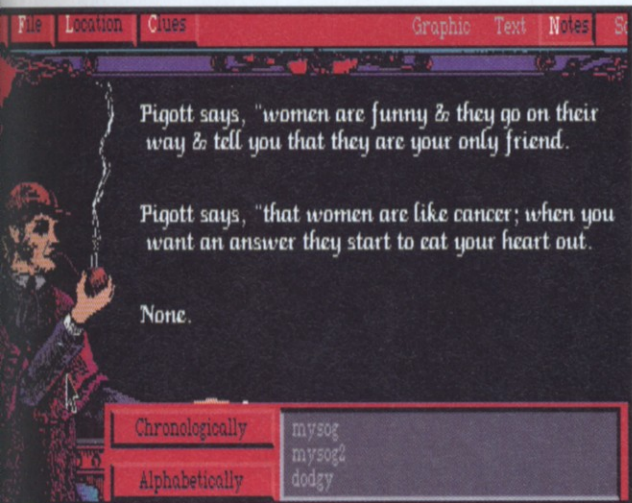
SIR WILLIAM WITHEY GULL



An eminent physician who was created a baronet after treating the Prince of Wales, he suffered a minor

stroke which left him partially paralysed along his right side. Evidence strongly suggests the murderer was left-handed, and Gull has been named as the Ripper by a number of authors and television broadcasters.

Detection for beginners (1) How to take notes: highlight a section from a suspect's statement window and it can be cut and pasted into your 'notebook,' which takes the form of another window. (I wonder how the Windows version will look.) Give it a deviously cryptic name and hey presto! - Lost forever.



But then Pigott has always been rather overly-fond of horses.

For a game which needs atmosphere to be effective, EGA (or glorious CGA) graphics are hardly ideal. The game's designers claim they didn't want the pictures of the bodies to be too shocking. Admirable self-censorship, but why have the bodies at all? Their presence serves no real purpose other than to titillate the kind of people who buy True Horrific Murder books to look at the pictures. Without bodies, the still pictures that comprise the game could then be rendered more effectively - if this really is the reason for the EGA, of course. It boasts in the manual that 'you do not need any fancy monitors'. Are they merely trying to keep all their angles covered to disguise the fact that they usually make wargames and thus thought EGA was state of the art? This detective stuff is catching. And another thing: considering the markedly unsophisticated nature of the game's graphics, it takes an awfully long time to move to and load background scenes, to summon portraits of the characters and to call up windows with different information.

The sound is equally poor. It doesn't even have the sampled street noises of *The Patrician*, another game based on still pictures, and the music is very poor. Every time you make a note of something, you're treated to a quick 'duh-duh DUUUUUUUHHH' on a synth from Calculators-R-Us, which you'll switch off after you've heard it twice, thus missing out on the only in-game music to have been composed by Mike Batt at the age of three.

Windows

The windows system isn't implemented as well as it might be, and has problems with constant use. The most irritating aspect of the game by far, however, is its pretensions to having events taking place in 'real time'. In fact, it's so annoying I've given it a box all to itself. The easily-tetched might care to avoid it completely.

Basically, then, far from being a detective game, it is in fact a game of comparisons and list-making. You make lists of statements. You make lists of evidence and build a case comprised of these lists of evidence. And if you persevere, you catch someone who didn't do it. It doesn't say: 'Planting incriminating evidence in order to frame a suspect.' at the beginning of the game for nothing. If that isn't an exercise in futility, I don't know what is. It's extensively researched, and no doubt exhaustively accurate, but I expect a game to be entertaining before I cough up money for it, and this isn't. ☒

PC ZONE score

Ugly, unpleasant and boring. Give it a job with PC Zone.

39

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PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K

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Minimum Speed: 10MHz

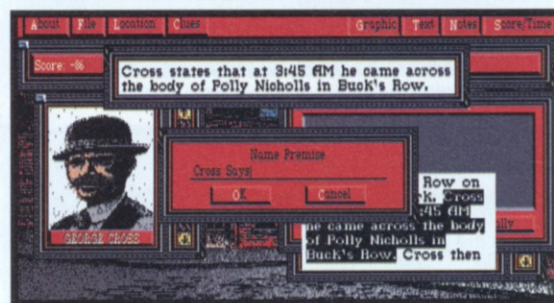
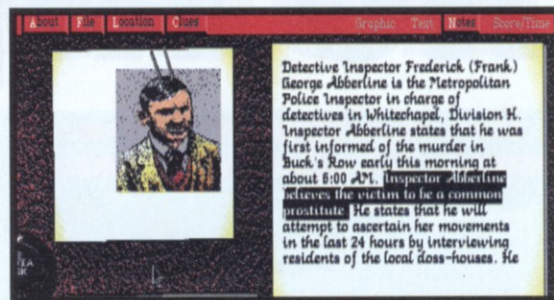
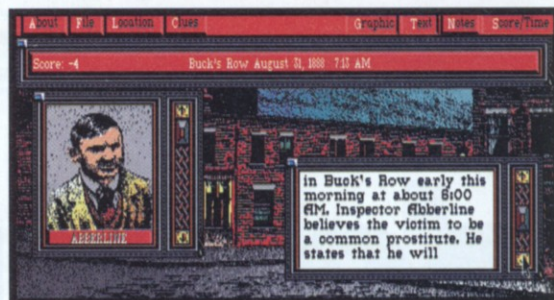
Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 3.5Mb

Minimum Graphics: CGA

Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse



REAL-TIME THRILLS AND SPILLS

Although time is of the essence and all that, *Jack The Ripper* doesn't really have a sense of time passing; graphics don't change and day runs into night without anything to punctuate it. It's not that inventive either: it always takes 176 minutes to search a location, whether it's a small backyard, a slaughterhouse or an entire street.

Your detection work is set within this constantly advancing 'game-time,' which means that characters come and go as you stand dithering at a location. The problem is that 'interrogation' also happens in real-time so you can still be reading through the statement given to you by the person, only to find that they leave the scene before you can finish reading it. Naturally, their information disappears with them. Since each arrival or departure is noted by another message box on-screen, you're often prevented from tagging a section of text you want. This makes a subject's disappearance all the more irritating.

If you're not quick, the body can even be removed before you can examine it. It doesn't help that the characters can only be 'interrogated' via moving the slider bar, and that you can't just pick the one you want. There's a delay while each picture is summoned from memory, but time ticks on. It's annoying to see a character leave the scene while you're trying to scroll down, or while the large but not exactly highly-detailed picture of the body is being drawn on-screen. And no, you can't just whiz the slider to the point you want, since the number of people present is always changing, and the distance down the bar alters accordingly.

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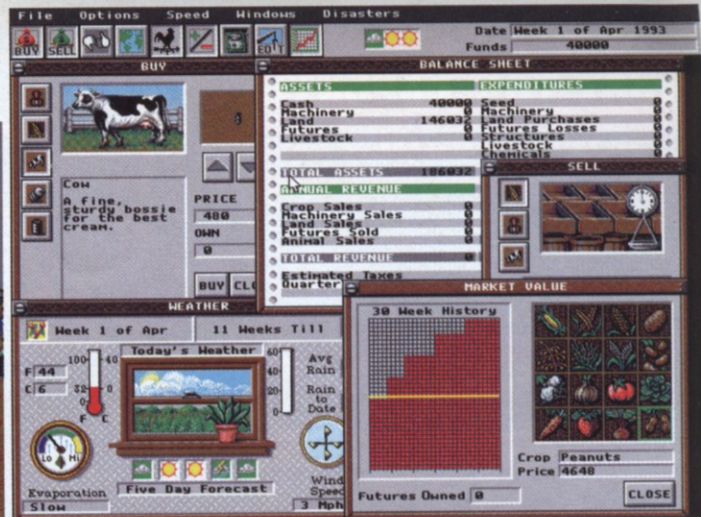


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FARMERS, EH? Bastards, the lot of them as far as I'm concerned. For instance my mate Bunny, back when we were nine, had his dog shot dead by a farmer. I remember he cried his eyes out, sobbing uncontrollably in a heap on the ground. It was a pathetic sight – one that would've brought even Imelda Marcos to her knees. But the farmer? Absolutely no remorse whatsoever. 'Dog?' he said glibly when confronted by Bunny's mum and dad, 'Oh well, it'd been worrying moi corn, you see!' His corn? Bloody hell.

Another unpleasant personal experience regarding farmers comes in the form of a friend of a friend's friend, called Tim. Tim works on a farm and occasionally appears at social gatherings where he corners people and gives them lectures on subjects such as modern silage techniques and about how he once met David Bellamy.

The final example. A band I was in ages ago did a gig at an agricultural college in Sussex, and we got booed off the stage. Okay, so the young farmers didn't like our particular brand of music – not many people did – but the point is that later on that evening, as we were loading all our gear into the van, we heard cheering, clapping and



Sim Farm

This page: (Top) Some of the many windows available. You may notice that now is a particularly good time to be a peanut farmer.

(Middle) When Worlds Collide: your farm competes for space with the town. (Bottom) Click on a field and you'll get this window. With good planning you can just about 'autofarm' from here, should you want to.

Opposite page: (Top) Flooded fields? Then how about installing an on/off valve in your ditch system? Like now!

(Middle) Some icon annotations, courtesy of Maxis. Saves me doing it.

(Bottom) The overhead map. (Main picture) Here's my farm. I'm growing strawberries and flowers of some description (okay, so I may not remember what they're called, but they certainly sell for a lot). I also recently branched out into cattle. I originally bought four cows. Now I've got enough to supply the Burger King chain for about six months.

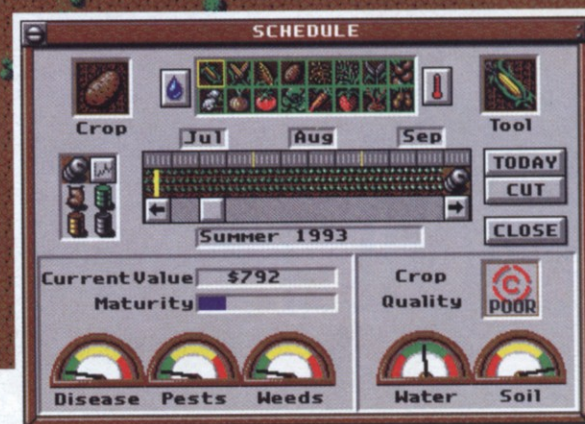
whooping as the DJ placed that night's most requested single onto the deck. And the oh-so-popular song in question? *Combine Harvester* by The Wurzels!

So there you have it. Farmers are callous, cold-hearted and merciless dog-killers who talk endlessly about the ins and outs of modern turd storage methods and who wouldn't understand decent music if it landed on their heads. Bastards, like I said.

Oh no!!!

So imagine my horror when I sat back in my chair after half an hour at the controls of *Sim Farm* and surveyed my new potato field with a feeling of pride!! And imagine my further horror when I saw myself actually (a) buying some more potato seeds, (b) planting two new potato fields, (c) checking on the current market price for potatoes, (d) digging some irrigation ditches to drain off the excess water from the potato field I'd accidentally placed on boggy land, (e) buying a little shed to keep my tractor and excess potato seeds in, and (f) removing a teeny bit of the fence next to the front door of my

How predictable is Duncan MacDonald? For instance, will he capitalise on his age and surname when writing the intro to this review of *Sim Farm* (from Maxis) by saying something along the lines of 'Old MacDonald bought a farm'? Yes, by jingo, he will.





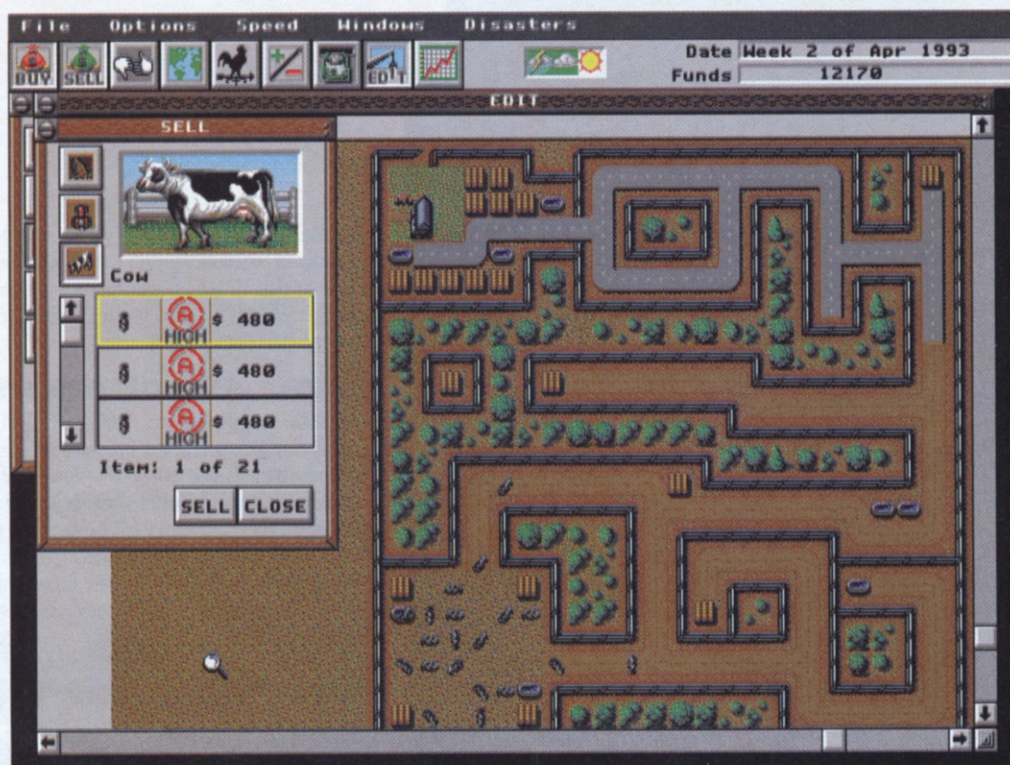
farmhouse and replacing it with a little country cottage-type gate... which I then 'opened' with a click of the mouse. Dark forces were obviously at work, and I was experiencing farmer mentality first hand.

Farmers aren't city planners

Sim Farm is a slow game. Well, sort of. I mean, it's not actually 'slow' slow, because whole days happen within the space of seconds but it's a kind of speeded up version of slow, if you know what I'm saying. I'll try and explain further though, because you won't know what I'm saying. Let me put it like this: in *Sim City* (the most obvious Maxis game for comparison purposes) you'd tend to get a very small working residential, industrial and commercial system together and then build outwards like billy-o while everything else took care of itself. The growth of your city, if you were careful, would soon be getting on for exponential - meaning you were continuously busy. The only thing that stopped you expanding was when problems occurred in the infrastructure. So you sorted them out. Still busy. And by the time you had sorted them out, even more money was floating around in the coffers, and so your expansion programme could continue as never before. And so on and so forth. By the time your city was spread out across the whole map (and this obviously took a long time), you were ready to try a new one... one shaped like a Yin Yang symbol or the Star of David or a banana or something.

Dull, ploddy gits

Being a Maxis farmer is a bit different to being a Maxis city planner, though. In *Sim Farm*, although time zips by like Ben Johnson on his latest 'prescription', you have to slow down while still, conversely, keeping up to speed. Not with me again? Well, take strawberries for example. In fact take any crop. You don't really do a lot, but at times your mouse is moving in a blur. You plant a field, you fertilise it, you wait. Then you wait a bit more. And then you wait a bit more. A problem occurs in the shape of an attack by small, herbivorous insects, so you spray pesticide to kill them. While you're at it you spray herbicide and fungicide too. Then you wait. Then you wait again. And again. And again. Don't forget: the days may be hacking by but the weeks take seven times longer; and the months four times longer still. So you check the market price for your crop. An upward trend appears, and so you feel optimistic. You look at your real-life watch. Your real-life telephone rings and you have a brief real-life chat to a real-life friend and arrange to meet in the Slug and Lettuce at 7.30 on real-life Thursday. You hang up and get back to the game. You check your field and find that the harvest is coming along apace and will be of 'A' grade, provided the weather holds out. So you check the continuously moving five-day weather forecast. Sunny. Sunny. Cloudy. Sunny. Rainy. On it scrolls. Cloudy. Cloudy. Cloudy. Sunny. Cloudy. You then check the temperature. 68°, 68°, 66°, 69°, 71°. Not absolutely ideal, but not bad either. Then you wait. Then you buy some fences and make a small enclosure. You've also just



decided to purchase a small amount of livestock to breed and sell, but are faced with the tough decision between sheep, cows, pigs or horses.

Blam! Farmer's adrenalin rush!

Then your decision is made for you: you don't buy any of them right at the moment, because your crop is ready, and so you go to the sell menu. Hmm. The asking amount is good, but it might be even better next week. So it's a gamble: (a) will the harvest retain its quality in storage for the duration, and (b) will the selling price go as you've predicted? Only one way to find out, so you decide to wait. You come to a decision regarding the livestock, and buy a couple of cows. And then you wait. Then the week has passed and you check the market prices again. Oh no! They've plummeted. And worse than that... the crop you stored has deteriorated. It was originally 'A'

grade. Now it's 'C' grade. You could have made \$7000. Now you can only make \$1500. Shit, shit, shit. Six months of your life down the toilet. Still, what's six months to a farmer? Their sense of time is much akin to a geologist's.

Stardate 2396 (farmerdate: unknown)

Some time has passed and you've bought more land and property. You now own 16 onion fields and a crop-dusting plane and are in the process of getting your strawberry-growing area together. Also, the two cows you originally purchased have turned into a massive herd. You've made loads of money on the futures market too with your rice paddies. Well done. You're a proper farmer at last. You're old as buggery, your skin looks like leather, your breath smells of vinegar, you own nine Range Rovers and a BMW, you've got your cowhand's

daughter pregnant and you've killed 915 dogs. It's time to leave the land and move full time into the stock market. But the City lads and lasses won't let you, because you smell a bit toiletish – and anyway, they're too busy organising a new food mountain.

Let's sum this game up

Sim Farm takes some elements from *Sim City* and crosses them with some from *Sim Life*, meaning that you end up with a game that's lots of fun at times, but not so much fun at others. I think a major problem is that if you screw up on one farm, it takes too long to get another established to the same degree. *Sim City* and *Sim Ant* were instantly accessible, which meant they were also instantly restartable should you get bored or stuck or whatever. *Sim Farm*, however, takes far more perseverance; it's a case of start a game and slowly build it up. Personally I haven't got the patience, the commitment or the underlying interest. But that's just me. What more can I say? *Sim Farm* is good, but not *that* good when you consider that *Sim City 2000* is just around the corner. **Z**

IN PERSPECTIVE

Sim Ant

Sim City

Sim Earth

Sim Farm

Sim life

PC ZONE score

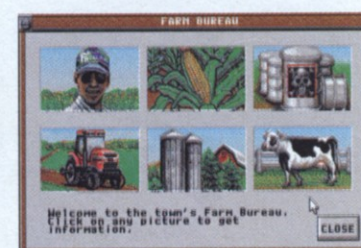
Quite good if you like farming but not as good as *Sim City*.

79

Price: £34.99 Out: Now
Published: Maxis/Microsoft
Telephone: 0444 246333

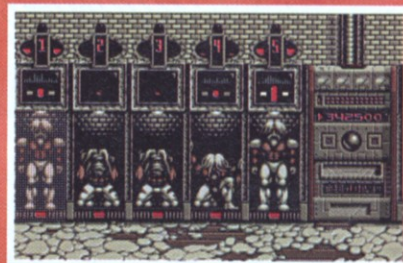
PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 640K
Minimum Processor: 286
Minimum Speed: 12MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 8-10Mb
Minimum Graphics: EGA/VGA
Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Roland and 100% compatibles
Controls: Microsoft compatible mouse
Comments: Needs IBM PC and 100% compatibles and DOS 3.3 or higher



(Top) An 'experimental' farm. The first cow that manages to find the open gate at top left gets itself sold to Dewhursts as a reward.
(Left) Another 'experimental' farm. I decided to save money on buying food and water by ensuring that my single cow is never able to actually reach the supplies. With the money saved, I will buy a new cow after the first one has died of starvation, and then I'll repeat the cycle till I'm bankrupt.
(Above) The Farm Bureau window, where you can glean info on everything in the game by simply clicking on the relevant picture. (New windows open up as a result, obviously).

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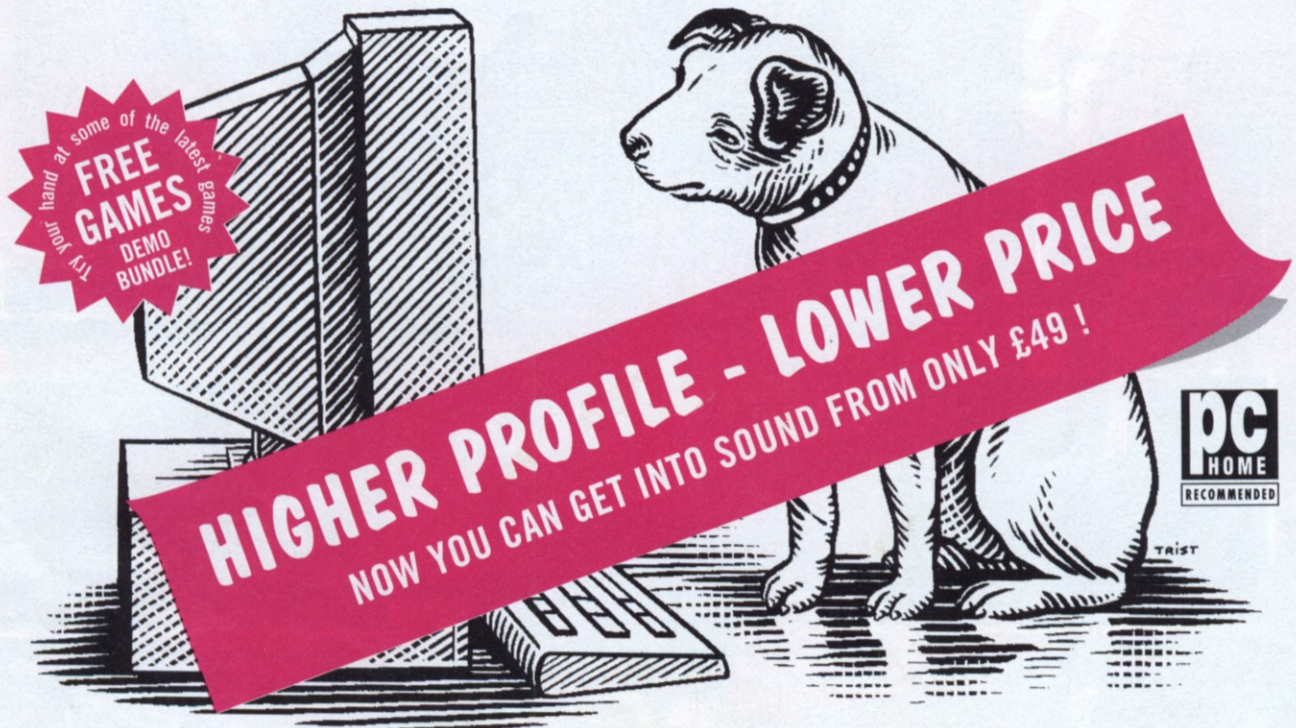
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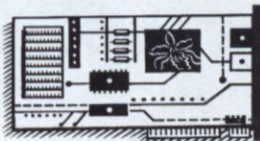
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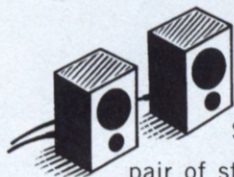


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PC ZONE score

Essential if you're determined to get the most out of *Strike Commander*.

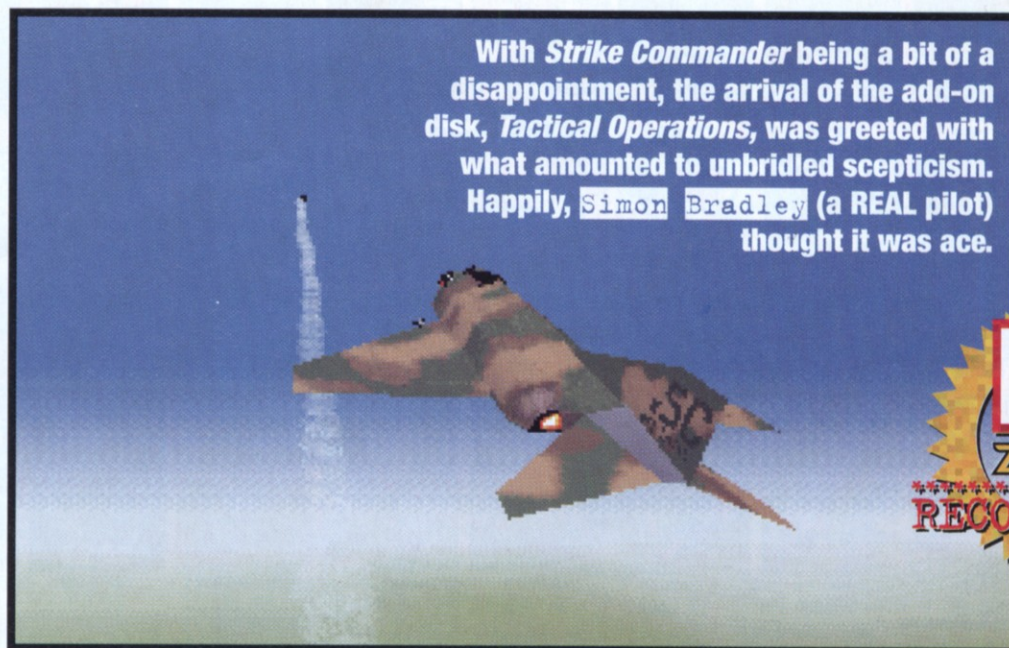
80

Price: £16 Out: Now
Published: Origin/Electronic Arts
Telephone: 0753 549442

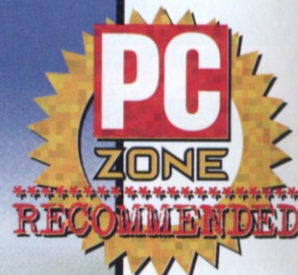
PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 4Mb
(8Mb recommended)
Minimum Processor: 386
Minimum Speed: 25MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 53Mb
including speech pack
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib,
Roland, Wave Blaster, MIDJ
Controls: Joystick, Mouse, Keyboard,
Thrustmaster, Flightstick

(Above) In hot pursuit of his shadow.
(Right) Mummy, my plane's got the measles.
Waaah!



With *Strike Commander* being a bit of a disappointment, the arrival of the add-on disk, *Tactical Operations*, was greeted with what amounted to unbridled scepticism. Happily, **Simon Bradley** (a REAL pilot) thought it was ace.



BY NOW, I EXPECT that everybody has heard of *Strike Commander*, which its creators, Origin, claimed would be the ultimate flight sim. You will also have read the less than enthusiastic reviews it received.

With the release of *Strike Commander Tactical Operations*, Origin have been quick to address at least some of the criticisms of the original product.

Strike Commander's flight model is a bit iffy to say the least, resulting in frustrating and unrewarding dogfights. Energy bleeds off when it shouldn't, and doesn't when it should, so you either overshoot your target and get a missile up your bum, or you run out of airspeed, ideas and sky all at once. Either way the result is usually messy.

Also, the padlock view beloved of *Falcon 3* jocks everywhere and essential for serious air combat offers no altitude or bearing cues whatsoever. Ground attack missions are spoilt by the fact that the beautifully bitmapped ground targets don't actually seem to be on the ground, but rather superimposed on it. Despite the criticisms there were some very good points to the game.

Tactical Operations is an add-on package which provides a new plot and updates some aspects of the original to transform *Strike Commander* into one of the best flight sims I have ever played.

The most significant difference to the game is the flight model. Energy now bleeds off realistically. When you stall, the aeroplane goes all over the shop rather than staying nice and straight like it did previously. Bombs and other external stores now make a difference to the performance of your machine, as does damage. The result is a rewarding and challenging flight sim.

It also sounds right, thanks to some tweaking of the sound effects. Purists amongst you will notice that there is still no shadow and that you can lower gears and flaps at 900 knots without any structural objections (like wings coming off), but despite this the overall result is pretty damn good.

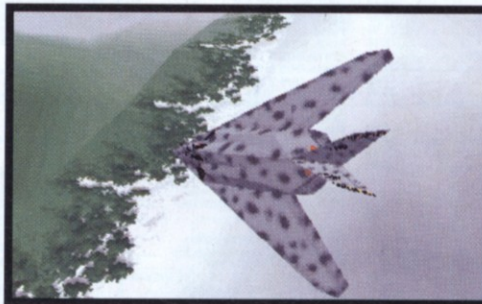
The extra game is really an extension of the original with the addition of an extra plane: F-22. When I say an extra plane that is exactly what I mean. When you get shot down, you are back where you were before with an all F-16 fleet.

Despite the quantum leap made by *Tactical Operations*, I'm still disappointed that the problems with the padlock view, unrealistic appearance of ground

'Transforms Strike Commander into one of the best flight sims I've seen.'

objects and lack of shadow haven't been addressed.

So, is *Strike Commander Tactical Operations* worth the 25-odd quid that it is going to cost you? Damn right it is. The only reservation I have is that it is an expensive way of getting the game that *Strike Commander* should have been in the first place. **Z**



STRIKE COMMANDER TACTICAL OPERATIONS

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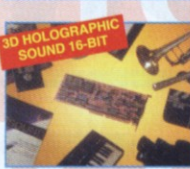
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SSI's new AD&D game, *Dark Sun: Shattered Lands* looked pretty snazzy, what with it being turn based and chock full of monsters and magic. We gave it to **Paul Presley** to find out whether it lives up to expectations.



As with any good RPG, you get to spend at least an hour rolling up 'stats'.



A typical cave-dwelling beast

DARK SUN:

See that insect?
That's me, that is.





Oops, sorry, that's me.



A map. It shows the surrounding area. Um, you can fold it up.



There's something about this place that says evil...

SHATTERED LANDS

YOU CAN'T HELP BUT feel sorry for SSI. They try hard, really they do, but no matter how advanced they seem to think they're getting with their graphics, sound or game engines, they just can't quite keep up with the improvements made to each of the *Ultima* range of RPGs. They seem to be forever cursed with the lore of the anoraks, the mark of the dice-rollers, the stigma of, as Macca puts it, the yellow fingernail brigade.

Dark Sun is supposed to represent a shift in style away from the old style Gold Box *Dungeons & Dragons* titles and into the new age of the role-playing game, with graphics worthy of the Tate, sound that would make Vangelis weep into his beer and gameplay that could rival anything Mr British and his cohorts could throw at you. It's a worthy aim and all power to SSI's collective elbow for trying, but how does it measure up to against the ever-improving competition?

Sand castles

First the obligatory plot explanation; justified in this case as the *Dark Sun* game is based on a brand new world for AD&D and has some new aspects to it. (If you're a player of the tabletop version – or you just want to know what the game is like and can't be bothered with all this scenario stuff – you'll most probably want to skip ahead a couple of paragraphs.)

Dark Sun is set on the desert world of Athas and leans heavily on ancient gladiatorial themes. Eons before, mighty wizards played heavily on the world's inherent elemental forces and ultimately caused the planet's sun to heat up immensely.

Athas' great seas were evaporated and all that was left was silt. The wizards now act as gods, ruling over enslaved cities, controlling the meagre water supplies and generally making life unpleasant for the populace. The only people who feel free of this rule are the scattered villages that lie across the dry land. Wherever there is a source of water, you're likely to find a small community.

Of course, the wizard-kings aren't happy to just let these villages be, they wouldn't be bad guys if they were. Fearing a united uprising of these outcasts (a force that could potentially destroy

By order of the Mighty and Omnipotent King Tectuktitlay, all slaves fit to carry a sword shall fight in the arena. Death shall be the gladiators' payment for weakness.

Let the games begin!

them) one wizard in particular, a certain Tectuktitlay (stop laughing at the back), has started to amass an army to wipe them off the face of the planet, one village at a time.

This is where your have-a-go heroes come in. Starting out as gladiators in Teccytuks... uh, Ticcy-tagliatelle's arena, you eventually escape confinement and set out to unite the tribes, finally taking them into battle with Taciatutti-frutti's forces. Along the way you'll run into a host of mini-plots to guide you on your way and boost your experience levels.

The Ultima-te RPG?

Let's not beat around the bush here. There are just two questions that you want to ask and it's my job to answer them. First, is it as good as an *Ultima*? And second, is it better than the previous AD&D games? The answers are (in order): why are you even asking the first question and let's face it, it would be hard to be worse.

Dark Sun shares a big similarity with the *Ultimas* in that its ability to tell a story is its strongest aspect. The use of *Dark Sun*'s sub-plots is much better than anything I have ever seen in SSI's previous works, and in most cases there is always plenty of story to keep the player moving from one part of the game to the next. Even the obligatory wandering monsters – a feature of RPGs that has always, without fail, managed to get so firmly up my nose that it takes a good dollop of Vicks Vaporub to get rid of it – are for the most part unobtrusive and manageable.

Have at ye!

Fantasy role playing games are a bit of a con when you think about it. The main selling point of an RPG is that it allows you freedom to deal with a situation however you see fit, not like an adventure game where you only get one solution to every puzzle. Of course you and I both know that 99 times out of 100, the only real way to deal with a problem in a fantasy RPG is to beat nine types of living crap out of it (a wonderful phrase I'm sure you'll agree). Thus, somewhat inevitably, the majority of RPGs live or die by their combat system.

Dark Sun is limited in this respect by its ties to the AD&D tabletop system. Not having any real scope for creativity, it can best hope to just hide as

A STICKY MOMENT

1 Uh oh. Bad guys at 12 o'clock. Let's treat them to a bit of hocus pocus.



2 First enter the character screen and select our resident magic-type person. Then a quick click on the Cast Spell icon and we're here.



A trader's caravan. Offering everything from food to weapons, you might even be able to find some work here.



He can't speak to us right now, he's all tied up! Bwah hah hah hah hah.



Chaos reigns supreme in this household.

PC ZONE score

The next best thing to an *Ultima*.

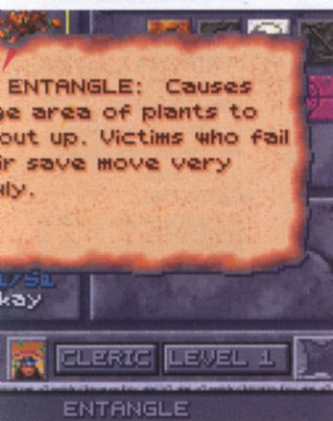
83

Price: £45.99 Out: Now
Published: US Gold/SSI
Telephone: 021 625 3388

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 2Mb
Minimum Processor: 386SX
Minimum Speed: 16MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 17Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: Roland LAPC-1/MT32/
SCC-1, Gravis, Aria, Ad-Lib, Ad-Lib
Gold, Sound Blaster, Sound Blaster
Pro, Thunderboard, MediaVision PAS
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

3 Select the appropriate spell type and level and then select the spell. In this case Web. We want to stop them in their tracks.



4 Back on the main game screen and our cursor is now the spell icon and around it is a representation of where the spell will effect. The white box also shows who it will affect.



5 The magic words have been spoken, the red spotted handkerchief has been pulled away and the webs have appeared all around our foe. They're well and truly stuck and, as Rory Bremner doing an impression of Paul Daniels would say: That's Magic!



much of the number crunching as it can and rely on making the whole thing look as attractive as possible (or as attractive as severing someone's vital organs with a double-bladed axe can be).

To be fair, they've done a pretty good job of it. It's resolved on a turns basis so you don't have to worry about controlling four different characters in real-time, you have full use of magic and ranged weapons and can even perform non-combatative manoeuvres mid-fight (such as talking to your opponent or examining objects or searching corpses). The only minor niggle is the display of hit points when you hit something. When I smack something with a sword, I don't really want to see a flash of numbers. If anything I want to see the sword's razor-like edge biting deep into the soft flesh of the unfortunate target. The gush of blood as my bringer of death inflicts a multitude of damage to my opponent's internal workings. The squeal of agony as I release the full fury of my intentions upon my foe... ahem, sorry. I don't like hit points, they're unrealistic. Let's leave it at that.

Magic also works well. Certainly better than most fantasy games to date (with the exception of you know who). All the spells familiar to AD&D fans are here, along with some brand new ones, and almost all of them produce some pretty fancy graphical effects when cast. The system also shows you how 'area effect' spells will take shape before you cast them, a boon to anyone that's ever cast a Web-like spell in a game and inadvertently had their own party get stuck like the proverbial flies. It could have benefited from a more direct access feature (to get to the spells you normally have to go through at least two sub-menus - thank heaven for turn-based combat) but otherwise there's no faulting it. You even get an on-screen description for each spell before you cast it. Pretty soon the manual will be redundant.

All in the mind

There is also another side to *Dark Sun*'s magic that, unless I'm vastly mistaken, hasn't been dealt with in a role-playing game before. Psionics: the power

of the mind (cue *Twilight Zone* music and creepy voice-over). It seems that every intelligent creature on Athas has Psionic talent, therefore everyone is, to a certain extent, a spell-caster (of course only those characters that become magicians or clerics or devote their time to studying psychic matters can really get proficient with them). These aren't the most visible of spells, instead taking the form of attacking the psychic forces of others rendering them more vulnerable to physical attacks.

There is the odd exception though. Psychic spells such as Disintegrate, if successful, will basically disintegrate an enemy on the spot. Unfortunately, in my mind, the fact that everyone can cast spells tends to reduce the whole magic ethos to little more than just another sword hanging from the adventurer's belt. I've always felt that magic in RPGs should be a wondrous thing, a true power of great mystery and force and not just a list of weapon substitutes. There isn't much *Dark Sun* can do about this, tied as it is to the AD&D rules but still, a thought for the future perhaps. Hmm, went a bit anoraky for a moment there, I do apologise.

You did say it wasn't very good?

Actually I may have been misleading you earlier. It's not that *Dark Sun* is a bad game; far from it. It just isn't as good as *Ultima*. Take Origin's child protégé out of the picture and you'd be lucky to find a top-down RPG that was better than *Dark Sun* (not that there's a great deal of competition around at the moment). There is an overall problem with it though - technology.

To be more precise it's ssi's programming. *Dark Sun* accesses the disk a lot. Far more than is necessary. The technical supplement recommends using disk caching software and increasing the FILES and BUFFERS commands in your startup files to amounts that I've never actually witnessed before. Even doing this with a ninja pc, the game was still pretty slow at accessing. This plus a fair amount of technical glitches on screen at times made me wonder whether I'd been sent a beta-test version of the game by mistake (one where minor

glitches like this are found and corrected before release). But no, I had a shrink-wrapped copy with proper commercial disks. It seems that *Dark Sun* just isn't the most polished of games.

I see a tall dark stranger

I hate to sound like an *Ultima* groupie but it is the best RPG series around so the comparisons have to be made. No, *Dark Sun* isn't as good as *Ultima Underworld 7*, *Serpent Isle* etc, and I have to say, between you and me, (quick glance from side to side) I've seen what's waiting in *Ultima VIII* and unless ssi radically change everything for the second *Dark Sun* release then it's not even going to warrant a first look, let alone a second.

Still, that's yet to come. *Dark Sun I* is a good solid role-playing game that could have benefited from better technology (that's odd, the entire game explained in one sentence yet it's taken me four pages to get to it). The message is simple: polish the programming and you've got yourself one hell of a game. At the moment you've just got a nice game - and we all know how much people hate to be called nice, don't we? ☞

IN PERSPECTIVE

No surprises here. *Ultima* is the best, *Dark Sun* is good, everything else is fair to middling.

Serpent's Isle

Ultima VII

Dark Sun

Power



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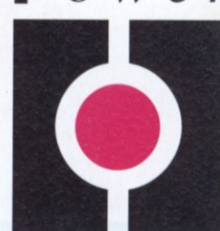
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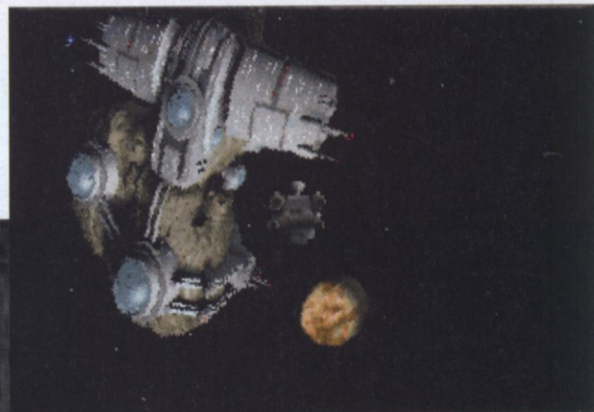
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(Above and left) Whoah! Don't get too excited. For a start, the pic to the left is from the intro sequence. More importantly though, the pic above (in-game, flying towards a giant mining colony) does the graphics far more justice than they deserve. Blink your eyes rapidly. Shake the page about. Imagine the giant bitmap scaling and rotating glitchily. Now you've got it.

Privateer

Duncan MacDonald now tells the no-holds barred true story of his encounter with *Privateer* from Origin/Electronic Arts.

Chapter one

In which a jiffy bag containing six *Privateer* disks and three add-on speech disks 'fall into Duncan's lap'.

PAUL (Lakin, Editor): How do you feel about doing four pages on this space combat and trading game? You get to fly around hundreds of solar systems, visit planets and space stations, interact verbally with other characters, trade goods ranging from base metals to narcotics and generally upgrade your original cargo ship until it's a ninjascope fighting platform... and then you can head off to war.

DUNC (MacDonald, Excited reviewer): Wow! What is it? *StarLord*? *Elite 2*?

PAUL: Neither. It's *Privateer*.

DUNC: ...Ah.


PAUL: What do you mean, '...Ah'?

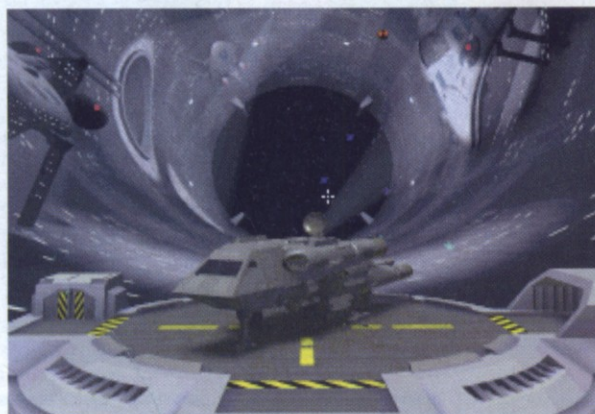
DUNC: Er, isn't that a cross between *Wing Commander* and *Strike Commander*?

PAUL: Yes. So?

DUNC: Well, I wouldn't say that either of those games are exactly my favourite?

PAUL: True, true, but I don't see what are you worried about - after all who's to say you won't like this game? In fact you might even love it, and then you'll be too embarrassed to come back into the office and admit it, won't you?

DUNC: Hmmm. You've got a point. Okay, hand the jiffy bag over - I'll take it home and try the game out in safety. Catch you later. 



(Above right) Now this is more like it... an example of the graphics from the trading/storyline part of the game. You're currently docked in a giant spinning space station. (Right) Ditto the above: but now you're in the upgrade store. (Bottom) The characters' faces are symmetrical. Mirrored perchance?



Chapter two

In which Duncan engages in some torturous introspection on a crowded tube train, heading south on the Northern Line.

'Could I possibly have your seat?' asked an old crippled woman who was struggling with three heavy Tesco carrier bags. I told her that no, she couldn't have my seat, and added that she ought to have bought less shopping. She muttered something under her breath but I was already in a world of my own, thumbing through the *Privateer* documentation. Separating the wheat from the chaff (i.e. the instructions from the novella), I soon felt a mild tingle of excitement. It looked as if the strategy elements of the game structure were going to be much nearer *Strike Commander* than *Wing Commander* or *Wing Commander 2*: in other words it looked as if there was actually going to be some freedom of choice involved – it wasn't going to simply be a film which allowed you to occasionally take the controls. But then I wondered about these all-important controls, which led, of course, to thoughts of the combat sequences themselves. What was *Privateer* going to look like, once you were in a fight? After all, it was sort of a sequel to the *Wing Commander* games. But then again it had come out after *Strike Commander*. Had Origin used the original *Wing Commander* graphics engine? Or the new *Strike Commander* one? I played through an imaginary movie of the possibilities, and instantly realised that I hoped Origin hadn't gone for the former; after all, the bitmapped ships and planets of the *Wing Commander* series had never worked for me, not even back in the innocent days of 1989 (or whenever it was). So I moved on in my mind-movie to the *Privateer*/*Strike Commander* scenario. Now, the problem with *Strike Commander* was that it had tried to be too clever for its own good, and had used all the new 'revolutionary' graphics techniques to the point where – as far as I was concerned – they detracted from the gameplay. The horizon on the guru shaded landscapes had been foreshortened so the game wouldn't slow down too much. The sense of altitude was missing completely. And so were several other things. Most important, though, was the fact that much of the ground detail didn't really seem to be 'at one with' the ground itself: the guru shaded landscapes seemed to be part of one subroutine while the objects seemed to be part of another – and they appeared to have been sort of glued together with the programming equivalent of flour and water paste. Basically *Strike Commander* shat all over *Wing Commander* but still didn't quite come off. But then something hit me. A sudden realisation. In space not only can no-one hear you scream, but there's also no land – no ground and no water. In other words there'd be no need for vast tracts of guru shading if *Privateer* was done in the 'modern' Origin style. At this point in my thought process the tube reached my destination, and so I disembarked and headed towards the escalator. ☹



Chapter three

In which Duncan continues to muse over modern graphics techniques and space combat games while buying some cheese in his local Londis store.

The girl behind the counter was looking very tanned: she'd been on holiday for the last two weeks in Ibiza and appeared to be in excellent spirits. However, she was still as inept as ever at using the till. I stood there patiently, jiffy bag in hand, as she entered and re-entered the incorrect price for my cheese. I drifted off back into the imagined possibilities of *Privateer*'s possible pros and cons, back into the land of guru shading. Ah, yes. So in a space combat game such clever tricks could be confined solely to the rendering of planets – which would generally be distant anyway. So all the textury bitmappy stuff could then be overlaid across the various polygon spaceships and there still wouldn't be much slowdown. In fact there'd be no reason why *X-Wing* shouldn't be shown up. And then I considered the fact that *X-Wing* hadn't really had a story – or not an interactive story, anyway. It had simply been a series of missions, with some atmospherics plastered over the top. So could *Privateer*, with character interaction, a twisting branching storyline, and texture mapped polygon spaceships, be even better? I didn't see any reason why not. 'I don't see any reason why not,' I said aloud. 'You don't see any reason why not what?' said the girl behind the counter, finally entering the correct price. 'It's a long story,' I replied as the till opened with a ping. She gave me a dismissive look and handed me my cheese – along with £3.65 in extremely small change. 'We're out of pound coins, 50s, 20s, tens, fives and twos,' she explained glibly. ☹

VOX POP

For the purposes of the test, *Privateer* was installed on two of the office PCs: a 486SX/25 and a 486DX/33, both with 4Mb RAM. As Jonathan observed: 'The 486SX just isn't fast enough. It's definitely a game for a 486DX.'

Overall, he wasn't too impressed with the game. 'The graphics between the space



combat sections are great, but the gameplay and graphics of the space sections are really bad.'

The 486SX installation included the Speech Pack: three HD disks of sampled sound to go with the dialogue that appears on screen. For whatever reason, the lip syncing seemed fairly poor, although this may have been down to slow drive accessing. Still, for the record, Jonathan pointed out that it looked like a rather badly dubbed movie.

So to the all-important question: would you buy it? 'No, I'll stick to *Star Control II* thanks.'



A flat-looking bitmap jerks randomly across the crosshairs of your under-armed and under-powered cargo ship.

VOX POP

I have to say, I'm not overly impressed,' explained Bob. 'I wouldn't buy it. It's just like *Wing Commander*. If they'd tweaked the graphics engine more, made it smoother and faster, it might've played better.'

The intro sequence whetted

Bob's appetite for a new level of graphical detail in the combat sequences which just wasn't there. On the other



hand, he found the adventure/space trading elements of the game much better. 'The attention to detail in the little animations is great. The background artists have taken inspiration from *Blade Runner*, and it works really well.'

After playing the game for a while, his opinion about the game crystallised. 'It's such a shame; it's got so far. The sound is fantastic and the story and cut scene graphics are great. If the space combat had been like *X-Wing* instead of being so jerky and unplayable, it would've been a great game. As it is, I wouldn't give it the hard drive space.'

Chapter four

In which Duncan finally stuck *Privateer* on his hard drive after having taken the precaution of freeing up 25 megs just in case there was no 'disk space check' on the install program.

So there it was. Installed. Just over 20 megsworth – including the additional sampled speech pack (i.e. extra dosh if one wanted to buy the game in its entirety). But now was the moment of truth. Would *Privateer* be better than *X-Wing* or what? Only one way to find out, so I typed `PRIV` and waited for the intro sequence.

And there it was. Intro akimbo. Lots of annoying pauses between the different scenes, but that didn't seem to matter because the pre-orchestrated spaceships moved brilliantly. They looked like bitmaps, but were as solid and scalable as polygons. Was it texture mapping? Or was it some brand new, and even cleverer than ever Origin routine which allowed pure bitmaps to be fully composed in three dimensions? I was still mulling this over when the intro ended and I found myself looking at a static screen on which there was a picture of my ship resting on a launching pad. I could click with the mouse on a door on the right to enter the space station and engage in some character interaction – or I could click on 'LAUNCH' and see what the in-space shooty shooty graphics looked like. So what do you reckon? What would you have done first? ☹

Chapter five

In which, much later that evening, Duncan is on the phone to a PC owning chum.

Boz: ...Flat and jerky, eh?

DUNC: Yeah, it's exactly the same as *Wing Commander*.

Boz: So what do the ships look like close up? Is that the same too?

DUNC: Yup, everything goes blocky. It's like someone's come up and draped a patchwork quilt over the screen.

Boz: But what about the 'feel'?

DUNC: What? You mean the controls?

Boz: Yes, how does it feel through the joystick?

DUNC: Oh, well, that's the same as *Wing Commander* too. There's no sensation of momentum. As soon as you stop moving the stick, the ship stops turning. And even though there are *X-Wing* style mini asteroids coming towards you the whole time to indicate speed, it still seems as if you're somehow stationary, in some kind of turret. And the spaceships you're shooting at turn, spin and dart away almost at random – you can't 'lead' the targets, and you've just got to hope for the best. There's just no bearing on reality. The laws of motion seem to have been overlooked completely. I mean, I know it's the future and all that, and I know you could put the spaceships' handling down to some sort of instantly correcting intuitive retro rocket systems, or even down to some kind of gravity drive that negates all laws of physics, but at the end of the day – even if you do make the imagination leap – the combat sequences still feel like a pile of cack.

Boz: Bummer!

DUNC: I know, I had high hopes as well. I wish Origin hadn't bothered putting *Strike Commander* together and had instead put all their guru shading/texture bitmapped eggs into *this* basket instead. Then it could have been fantastic. I mean, the size of the star system feels great.

Boz: As big as *Elite*?

DUNC: No, but it's plenty big enough. You have to fly to hyperspace points, and you use your navigation maps to get around. You really feel like distance is being covered. Unfortunately you keep on getting attacked, and space combat in *Privateer* is nothing less than a chore: you have to pummel away at the enemy for hours until their shields are depleted. You can target them with your radio and try to talk your way out of a battle, but they're generally not interested – especially at the beginning of the game when you've got useless weapons. Seeing as the only way to get good weapons is to trade, and seeing as the only way to trade is to fly between planets and so on, the inevitable tiresome combat sequences drag you into a Catch 22 'can't be bothered' situation.

Boz: But that initial difficulty sounds quite good – quite challenging...

DUNC: And it would be if the fighting was more realistic. I think the only way to get anything out of *Privateer* is to already be a confirmed *Wing Commander* and *Wing Commander* 2 nut.

Boz: And I'm not. Blimey, it's half past one. Time to crash out. See you later.

DUNC: Yeah, catch you later. ☹



Chapter Six

In which Duncan is asleep in bed, and is having a nightmare.

WEIRD ROCK MONSTER: But you cannot even play the first *Wing Commander*... make no mistake, I have watched you, you display the skills of an infant chimpanzee. I, however, know all the tricks, the turns, the feints. With such skills I could upgrade my equipment quickly – and I would use my long distance scanners to full effect, where as you seem to ignore them. My shots would hit home. The game would open up. I would be satiated.

STEAM TRAIN DRIVER: My friend the stone is correct. I can see that *Privateer* is hard for you, but I myself can chug on, and on, and on, and on. The further one goes, the more one understands. The more one understands, the further one may go. Stick to the tracks my friend, stick to the tracks. (Hoot hoot).

CAPTAIN KIRK (suddenly appearing): But my friend here is no novice, allow me to defend him.

ROCK MONSTER (now a flower for some reason): But he hates bitmaps, he is beyond defence, he is nothing.

CAPTAIN KIRK: He is not nothing. He is the reincarnation of Isaac Newton.

DUNC: Yeah? Blimey.

CAPTAIN KIRK: He is also the reincarnation of Jimi Hendrix.

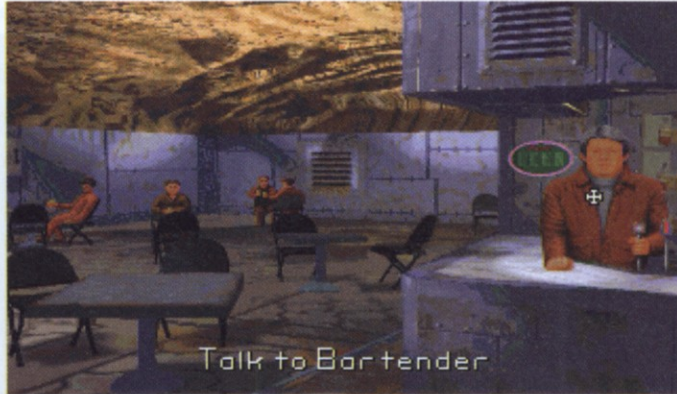
DUNC: Excellent.

ROCK/FLOWER MONSTER: This may be so – but I must have the final say.

CAPTAIN KIRK: Then tell me! Tell us all.

ROCK/FLOWER MONSTER: If you've played *X-Wing* then *Privateer* will seem disjointed: the fighting sequences will be beyond your understanding, and you will not proceed. If your only true love is *Wing Commander*, however, then *Privateer* will offer more than you could imagine – the flying parts are complimented by the plot parts and the plot parts are complimented by the flying parts. There is duality at work here. The game is like two giant eggs; two ovoid spokes on an unpredictably resonant hub!

DUNC (waking up): Er, that's roughly what I was trying to say – apart from the bit about the eggs and the spokes and the hub. Basically if you can put up with *Privateer's* crap fighting sequences, you'll soon become totally involved. If you can't, you won't. Comprendo? ☒



(Left) The bloke on the far left has just spilt your pint and nicked your girlfriend. Time to talk to the bartender, eh?



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VOX POP

Of the three testers, Martin seemed the most impressed. 'It's based on a classic – *Elite* – and that's the strongest thing in its favour.' While playing the game he wrote down a list of pros and cons.

On the pro side were the music and sound in general. He found the themes appropriate to the graphical feel, and felt they enhanced the game considerably. He praised the variety of missions and weapon systems, and the user interface. He also thought the non-combat graphics were superb. 'The ground visuals are excellent; especially all the little

'The intro sequence whetted Bob's appetite for a new level of detail in the combat sequences that just wasn't there.'



events that happen while you're working out where to go next.'

On the con side, he wasn't too impressed with the combat sequences. 'It's really irritating the way the targeting keeps switching to what's in view, not necessarily the target you're looking for.' He was also critical of the jerkiness of the scrolling, even on the 486DX/33. 'It's okay on an SX, but you really do need a DX for it to be playable.' As a fan of the original *Wing Commander*, he found the graphics in the space sections more palatable than the other testers did, though he pointed out that it was 'too much like *Wing Commander*, but a slight step up from it.'

IN PERSPECTIVE

Privateer

Strike Commander

Wing Commander

Wing Commander II

X-Wing

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 4Mb

Minimum Processor: 386

Minimum Speed: 25MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 20Mb

Minimum Graphics: 256 colour VGA

Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, RAP10 Flash MPU 401 interface or 100% compatibles

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse, Joystick

Comments: Needs MS-DOS 5.0 or higher. Can buy a Speech accessory pack for £19.99. For this you'll need Sound Blaster Pro or 100% compatibles. Does not support disk compression



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When Two Worlds War

Andrew Wright boldly goes where no wargamer has gone before – a game from Impressions without silly little figures.



It might be a 486 to you, but it's a Westock-Waadam Warfare Workstation as far as Impressions are concerned. Ha ha.



HENEVER I THINK of Impressions' games I always think of those ridiculous little redcoats marching robotically around *Rorke's Drift* pursued by equally badly animated Zulus. Old Bromhead and his mob in the 24th Foot would turn in their

graves if they could see that lot. Not surprisingly, when I was caught napping by the editor with a request to look at a space combat game from the same outfit, my first thought was to pretend to be an answer phone. Then the bills started piling in again and here we are.

At least *When Two Worlds War* looks a little different. If nothing else it's warfare on a galactic scale so there shouldn't be too many badly animated, green-eyed monsters wandering about – just badly animated little spaceships and tanks. The box looks pretty good too: 'A Strategic Simulation of Interplanetary Conflict', it screams in a futuristic-looking typeface. That sort of thing

always amuses me – just how, exactly, do you simulate something that has never actually happened? At least we don't know if it's ever happened, which amounts to much the same thing.

Voice activation

The game comes on two high density disks and takes up around 6Mb of hard disk space though you could reduce that substantially by ditching the digitised speech. Quite a few sound cards are supported, including something called an Aria speech recognition card which I don't happen to have come across before. However, if you've got one of these, you're supposed to be able to sit back on the sofa and bellow at the game instead of pointing and clicking with the mouse. Whilst 'move out of the way of that bloody missile you prat' probably isn't the best way to play the game, and may even lead to RSI of the vocal chords, there is a serious side. It is nice to see games designers

DESIGNER UNITS

You can use standard MUs or design and build your own, unfortunately that sounds an awful lot more fun than it is. While you can opt for heavy armament and speed at the expense of armour, there is no relationship between them. A heavily armoured tank travels just as fast as a lightly armoured one, given the same propulsion unit. The picture of the craft does change but in reality it is simply a base model with a few bolt-on extras.

On the plus side, there are something like 25 billion possible combinations, as the manual helpfully points out, and this leaves you pretty free to create MUs for any particular strategy you care to devise. For example, apart from the standard tank, submarine, aircraft, spaceship and satellite you can create spotter units with good levels of radar technology, light, medium or heavy artillery units with good range, targeting and firepower, or specialised landing craft with armour and transport capabilities.

The MUs will quickly become obsolete as technology progresses, so it's a good idea to plan ahead. What amounts to heavy artillery today will be light artillery tomorrow, so you can

demote them to defensive roles, scrap them completely or refit them with higher tech levels.



building in support for those who may really need cards like the Aria: people with limited limb movement being a prime example.

The documentation is very good too and you get plenty of paper for your pennies, including an 120 page manual, another 50 pages of technical supplement and tutorial, and a good quick reference card. While a 386 or better is recommended, only 640K of RAM is required and it works well with the usual binful of TSRs that we PC owners like to accumulate. I'd would have thought it would be quite playable on a standard 286 as it isn't particularly demanding on the hard disk or the CPU. Still, that's what they recommend.

Installation uses the now indispensable installation routine that also configures the sound options too. The intro is short and sweet – a plus point in my book as I hate having to constantly wade through repetitive intros. The first thing you see is the main menu with several setup options. Here you can customise your war any way you choose, from the name and type of planet to the starting technology level, and there's an easy setup option to take you step by step through the process. Once you've got used to the game system, you can skip the option and go straight to the meat.

The first big disappointment hits you here. What are triumphantly called 256 colour VGA graphics on the package end up as very low resolution 320 by 200 screens that aren't VGA in my book at all. It might have oodles of extra colours but they're not really needed – give me 640 by 480 with 16 colours any day.

Was that supposed to be a joke?

The aim of the game, as it were, is to conquer your enemy's planet. This you do by immersing yourself in a really silly scenario that pretends your PC is a Westock-Waadam Warfare Workstation. It's a joke you see. You're supposed to think that you're sitting in front of an electronic warfare computer which is controlling the whole interplanetary war but really you are sitting in front of a PC which is pretending to be an electronic warfare computer which is pretending to control the war... Oh never mind.

The manual is full of jokes along these lines too. The best one is the difference between the basic and deluxe versions. Apparently the deluxe version has a full sensory immersion system that lets you control things by nodding unspecified bits of your anatomy but due to physiological limitations of the cerebral cortex, humanoids can only use the basic version with a Manually Operated Utility Selector. Get it? I won't tell you what the worst joke was.

The problem with *When Two Worlds War* is that halfway through your first game, you end up cursing your pathetic cerebral cortex, wherever that is, and wishing you had the deluxe version because the

control system is one of the most complicated I have ever come across. My cerebral cortex got twisted into knots just trying to work out how to get a unit to do anything. And, before you start, I *did* read the manual. Well, most of it.

Anyway, back to the beginning. The essence of the game is that you play red while the computer plays blue. That's easy. You each have a planet and there's a lump of space in-between. Everything's strictly 2D by the way and there's no wrap around, presumably so as to not to strain the cerebral cortex even further.

To start out on your conquering career, you have to construct resource generators – power stations, mines, farms and labs – to build up resources which you can turn into military units, or MUS in game parlance.

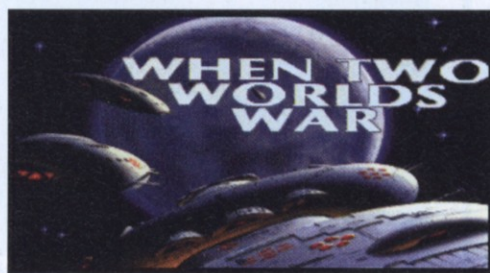
The object of the MUS is to explore and attack the enemy planet and destroy his resources while safeguarding your own. Space travel is vital, of course, so the space travelling MUS have cargo capability to transport the land, sea and air based units. All the while this is going on, you have to keep up research in order to improve your tech levels in the various technologies – land, sea, air and space travel, fire power, range and targeting, and armour, radar and transport capability. The MUS can be organised into squads, with general instructions to attack, hold, defend and so on. You also have to keep sufficient farms going to feed your men and expand the number of bases on your home planet.

At the start of the game the whole of the enemy planet is invisible, much like the classic *Empire* game from the now defunct Interstel, on which *When Two Worlds War* seems to be based quite heavily. As you land units on the red planet, more and more becomes visible, enabling you to develop strategies more easily and concentrate your forces in the right place. The best strategy seems to be to insert a few fast scout ships onto the enemy planet, revealing as much as possible before they are blown into bursts of little red pixels.

Quicksand

Now all this appears pretty complicated and it probably sounds just the sort of thing you were looking for. Well, you haven't even heard half of it yet and it starts to go downhill from here. *Empire* was a classic game: you moved units around, exploring hidden parts of the game world and building units to replace losses. That was basically all there was to it and it was this simplicity that made it the classic that it became. *When Two Worlds War* takes the same theme and adds so much extra complexity that it is all too easy to end up in a quicksand of rules, not knowing which button to press next. This is guaranteed to kill anyone's enthusiasm for a game and in excitement terms, it's the equivalent of a bucket of cold water.

The game tries hard to be comprehensive. You can order your units to do almost



IN PERSPECTIVE

A somewhat poor attempt at stealing *Empire's* rather dusty crown from its cupboard under the stairs.

Civilization

Empire/Empire Deluxe

When Two Worlds War



- 1) Hmmm - that world looks vaguely familiar.
- 2) Research new weapons...
- 3) Build your own spaceships...
- 4) Spend three hours working out how to send them on missions...
- 5) ...and get them blown away when you're not looking.



PC ZONE
score

An unattractive attempt at a strategy wargame that fails to add anything new – including excitement. Give me dice and counters any day...

63

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PC ZONE
specs

Minimum Memory: 640K RAM
Minimum Processor: 386 or better with MS-DOS 3.0 or higher
Minimum Speed: 16MHz
Installation: Essential
Minimum Hard Disk: 6Mb
Minimum Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Ad-Lib, Roland, Aria or PC speaker
Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

anything by using a kind of object orientated command system where missions are built up from a dozen or so simple commands – fly to here, unload two tanks, bomb the farm over there and go back to base. If you're not into that level of detail, there are what the game calls Q & A missions that are simpler to order (e.g. fly to the red planet and patrol the northern half). At the other end of the equation are the direct control missions where you basically fly or drive the unit yourself but the commander who gets his hands dirty isn't doing the job right so it should only be used in emergencies.

In all the interface is well designed but paradoxically it is also confusing and not helped at all by the low resolution graphics. Some of the icons on the smaller buttons are merely blobs and don't improve the playability. There is just too much information to handle and with somewhere near the limit of 100 MUs in action, controlling the game can be a nightmare. However, the tutorial helps adjust the balance and the manual is certainly extensive. It doesn't quite go far enough in terms of hints and tips leaving newcomers to the game a little

'When Two Worlds War isn't so much a wargame as a strategy game.'

unsure of what best to do. It can be hard to send some forces on the offensive, return to the main screen to produce a few more or cope with a new threat, then return to the enemy planet to find a couple of burning hulks. This never knowing what

happened is a major obstacle to the gameplay.

One thing that helps initially is the digitised speech. Each time something happens, a digitised male voice provides an update, but it can start to get irritating after a while. Turning it off doesn't help either, as there are no dialogues to replace the spoken messages and the only option is to keep listening – at least until you've got a bit further with the game system.

When Two Worlds War isn't so much a wargame as a strategy game and a complicated one at that. If you're looking for a real challenge in terms of detailed rules and a huge playing space with scattered actions, it might just fit the bill, but those wanting gameplay and fast action will be disappointed. Underneath the mass of detail there's a good game trying to get out. Unfortunately it's just too well buried. **Z**



All I can say is, if War Of The Worlds had been like this, nobody would ever have heard of H.G. Wells.



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Violence. Mayhem. Blood-letting. Gore. Bits of brain. Intestines lolling out of disembowelled abdomens. Smacks in the mouth. Large over-sized kitchen knives in the mouth. Huge double-headed spiked poisoned battleaxes in the mouth. Gore. Gore. Gore. **David McCandless** reviews *Brutal Football*.

Brutal Football



IT IS CUSTOMARY, WHEN reviewing a) a sports game that is b) set in the future and involves c) lots of comedy violence (such as *Brutal Football*) to fill your introductory paragraph with 'amusing' thought-up possibilities of a) b) c) games. My first attempt was to dream up

a game called Gruesome Tennis in which Becker and Edberg slug a small primed nuclear device across a net at each other while members of the audience beat them about the thighs and groin with small bits of lead piping. But that was neither clever nor funny. Then I thought I might wax on about rugby, disregarding humour for irony and playing on the fact that it is violent, comic but (irony upon irony) not a future sport. But then the WinWord Ponce-O-Meter (under Word Count in the

Tools menu) started beeping and flashing a red 'Anthony Burgess' rating at me (a warning usually reserved for when you start using the word 'juxtapose'). So in the end I plumped for a simple, unamusing explanation of *Brutal Football*'s plot.

It's 2034. American Football is now frowned on as we now frown on badminton, as a not-violent-enough sport

for those wispy accountant types. *Brutal Football* has risen in its place. It's a deadly game, where the severing of limbs and decapitation and mutilation of your enemies is placed above old fashioned notions of fair play and game rules. The sport is played by genetically bred mutants, altered at molecular level to closely resemble Vikings (blonde Nordic beards, tanned seafarer's skin, and with the genocide of Minke whales high on their social agenda). They're grouped loosely into teams of eight, and labelled in what can only be termed (if you were a total ponce) 'pseudo-futuro-trendy' names like The Krankers, Zappers, Gooners and Rozzers. Together, these team-folk form the Brutal Sport's league, competing in off the record 'unfriendlies', knockout championships, or just simple two-player extended maiming sessions.

Son of a pitch

The action takes place in an enclosed stadium. The green pitch bullets from left to right and the team members (equally ballistic) are decked in cga-style shades of red and green. The pitch is surrounded on three sides by pseudo-futuro-trendy metallic architecture, the two goals are just big holes and the kick off point is a hexagon in the centre of the pitch. That's it. From there on in it's just a free for all. A game lasts seven minutes and there are no rules. You are free to run, kill, mutilate, murder, jump and die just about anywhere you like.

Each member can perform a range of moves. From the obvious passing and kicking of the ball to high leaps, punching, and 'stomping' (the repeated kicking of a downed opponent).

Occasional power-ups appear here and there, adding to the overall maiming potential of your team. The Sword has obvious repercussions which the Shield will prevent. Grenades blow large holes in the pitch; Bombs blow bigger ones. The Rabbit doubles the speed of your players while the Tortoise (surprise, surprise) slows them down. Lightning and Ice Cube icons strike down and freeze your foul enemies respectively, while, for maximum amusement value, Running Ball makes the ball sprout little legs and follow you around. Up to three icons can be accumulated per team and then delicately flicked through and unleashed at the appropriate moment.

Joke-o-mation

In computer games involving violence and blood (in large litre cartons) two things apply. Firstly, the violence is comic (to avoid 'furore') and the blood-letting and decapitation is copious (allowable for the first reason). So, in *Brutal Football* we have the stabbing, punching, bombing and decapitating of our opponents in hilarious joke-o-mation. Small spurts of blood for punches, larger showers of gore for stabbing, huge explosions and dents in the playing fields for the bombs, and then small Viking heads which can be picked up and thrown about in head-chopping mode. As amusing as all this probably sounds, the violence seems to be just tacked on for effect. Okay, so if you kill seven of your enemy's team members you win, but the point - throwing the ball in the goal - becomes secondary. This effectively turns the game into a glorified beat 'em-up, which in turn, taking into account the limited nature of the violence and the lack of a good range of 'moves', becomes a poor beat 'em-up.

'For full amusement value, Running Ball makes the ball sprout legs and follow you around.'

PC ZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 590K and 320 expanded memory

Minimum Processor: 386SX 20

Minimum Speed: 20MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 2Mb

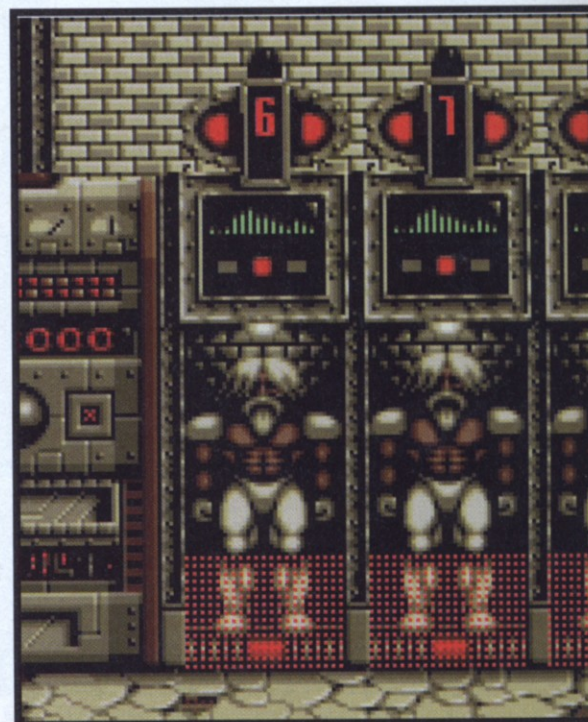
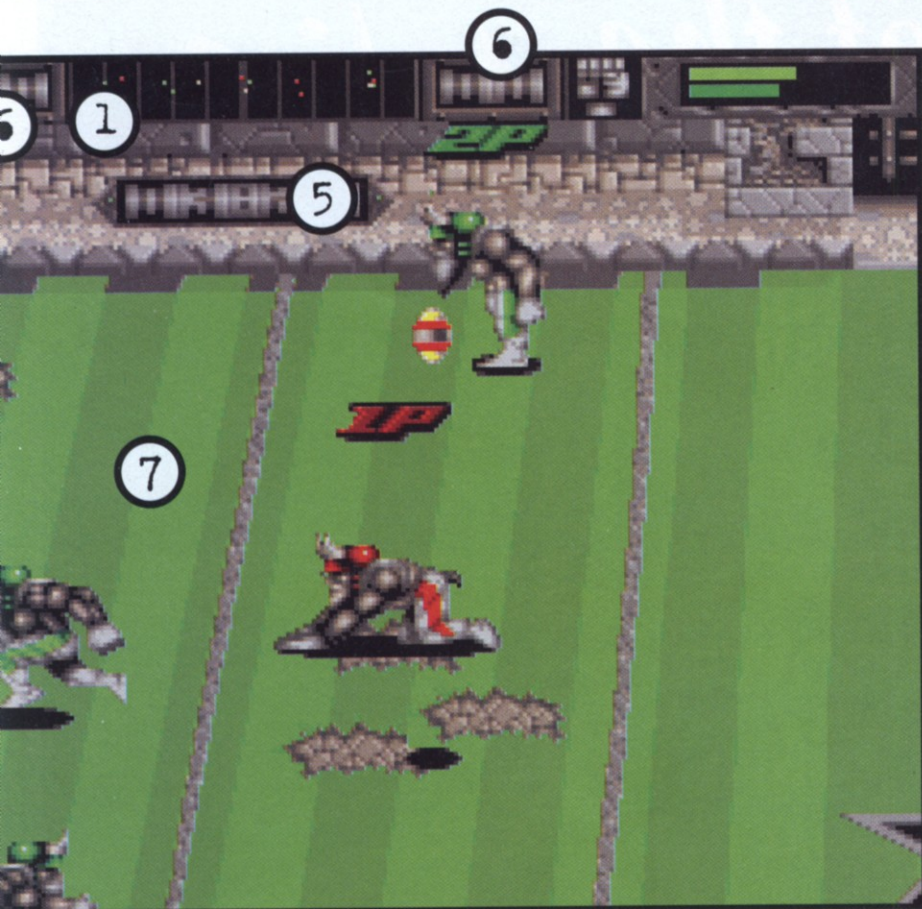
Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: Sound Blaster, Ultrasound.

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse



- 1 This is the radar. The size of the pitch renders it useless. The speed of the game renders it doubly useless. Coloured dots represent players (dead or alive); flashing dots indicate power-ups.
- 2 The strength bar gives you a glimpse of the energy of the current player. Too low and his head will fall off (true).
- 3 This is the overall team strength. Player performances begin to ebb if enemy attacks are relentless.
- 4 Your icon storage depot (three max).
- 5 Game time remaining.
- 6 Score (totally irrelevant).
- 7 The battlefield.



In the locker room your DNA designed thugs are stored in stasis, their health monitored on computer screen. Using funds accumulated through wins, you can stoke up individual players or repair serious injuries and even head loss.



Here, Vord Dem Den Auslanger (Jazzers) is administering foot-to-mouth resuscitation on Sven Sevn McSven (Devils) with hilarious open-heart surgery effects.

In *SpeedBall 2*, the classic future thug's yardstick game, the first and foremost priority was the actual game - i.e. getting the ball in the goal. Secondary to that was the violence and thirdly was the huge comic effect of disembowelling an opponent and having him stretchered off. Graphically speaking it was stylish, futuristic without being pseudo-futuro-trendy, and playable to the extreme. Visually, *Brutal Football* is a poor second with a rather uninteresting front end, average dully-coloured sprites, and not too much joke-o-mation (bar the showers of gore). Gameplay-wise, in the heat of the action the left to right scrolling doesn't give you much chance to gauge where a ball is heading or which 'vertical plane' your enemy is standing on. Also, the system of cycling through your ninja death icons with F1 doesn't work too well under pressure.

'Small spurts of blood for punches large showers of gore for stabbing...'

On a more positive note I'd say that the locker room section adds a token amount of 'management' depth. It's also nice to see bomb and

grenade damage as well as dead bodies still littering the pitch throughout the game. But the point is that in its attempt to capitalise on the current love of NFL and WWF, Millenium have misplaced the game along the way. In two-

player mode the game improves immensely but its still a long toss from being brilliant, and a longer toss from being better than *SpeedBall 2*. **Z**

PC ZONE score

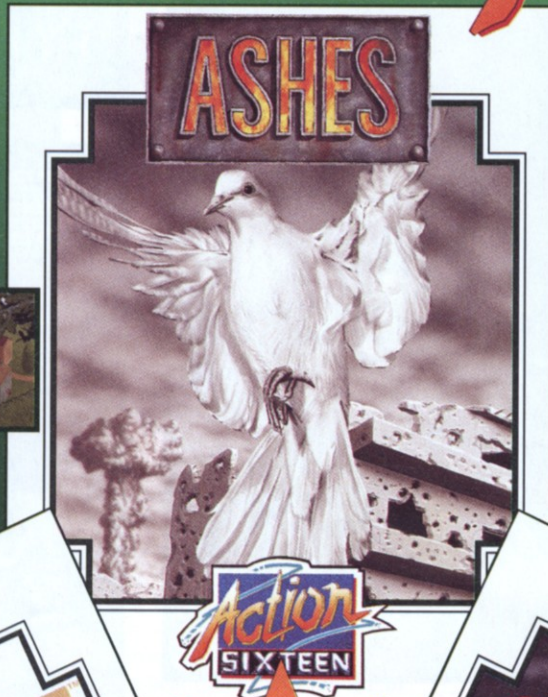
Too much violence, not enough game.

65

Price: £29.99 Out: Now
Published: Millenium
Telephone: 0223 844 894

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Bargain.Bin



Performing the knife-edge pass (the one where you pass each other with inches to spare).

Blue Angels

THERE ARE THREE signs that a flight sim is really old: the installation procedure requires you to make the game's directory and copy the files by hand; there is no soundboard support and it doesn't support a joystick. I'm guessing around '86 maybe '87, for *Blue Angels*, the stunt team simulation that, let's be honest, does for flight sims what *Take That* do for quality music.

I'm all for innovation in a flight sim – *Stunt Island* still remains one of my all-time favourites to this day – so the thought of flying death-defying stunts and aerial acrobatics in an F/A-18 quite appealed to me. I was prepared to look beyond the limited graphics and sound and was looking forward to taking the lead in that hair-raising stunt where two planes pass each other, head-on, with just inches between them, while both pilots are juggling a bowling ball, a wristwatch and a flaming club – all this while the co-pilots are whistling a version of I'm A Yankee Doodle- Dandy through a milk bottle.

Of course, I was expecting too much. *Blue Angels* takes itself seriously (you can't even crash into another plane). Its main problem is that once you've performed these breath-taking stunts, there isn't really a decent way to view them – a feature that one would have thought was essential to a game of this type. The most accurate way to view the proceedings is from the spectator stand, but it's accurate in that the planes appear as minute dots on the horizon and you need a decent pair of binoculars to see anything.

Face facts; *Blue Angels* is old and has had its day. In fact, even when it was young I doubt its day was anything particularly worth celebrating. I think it's probably best just to leave it to retire with at least some dignity in the old pilot's home where it can boast about the good old days and tell lies about the size of its jet exhaust. *Paul Presley*

Interesting, but hardly spectacular.

SCORE

30

specs

Min. Memory: 640K
Min. Processor: 286

Min. Speed: 8MHz Installation: Optional
Min Hard Disk: 0.5Mb Min. Graphics: CGA
Soundcards: None Controls: Keyboard

Price: £12.99 Out: Now Publisher: Hit Squad Telephone: Ocean 061 832 6633



Once again our reviewers use their poverty as an excuse to indulge in some shameful nostalgia.



The cockpit view in *Chuck Yeager*. Once you've seen one, you've seen 'em all.

Chuck Yeager's Air Combat

THERE I WAS, TWO THOUSAND feet above sea level and the bally Hun coming in from all sides. Messerschmitts to the left, Fockers (giggle) to the right and nothing but a vast empty sea waiting ahead. I wasn't worried though. I simply turned on the afterburner, launched a volley of missiles at my enemies and was up in the stratosphere before they could say 'Gott in Himmell!' Nothing like a fair fight, eh?

That's the great thing about *Chuck Yeager's Air Combat*: you can finally live out all those 'What if?' fantasies such as 'What if I was flying a Spitfire against a MiG-31?' The other great thing is that it's still one of the best flight sims around and you can now get it for just 15 nicker.

Okay, so the planes aren't the sexiest you'll ever find, the graphics aren't the greatest any more and it doesn't have the complexity of *Falcon 3.0* or the detailed planning of *Tornado*, yet it's still amazingly flyable and has a few innovative features that have yet to appear elsewhere. Take the Target Window, for instance, that shows you what your current target is doing, making it easier to follow him; or Chuckie's in-flight advice as he screams at you to slow down before you rip your wings off.

This should be an essential part of any self-respecting flight-sim buff's library – especially at this price. The only thing missing is a two-player link up facility. *Paul Presley*

Proof that pensioners still have what it takes.

SCORE

85

specs

Min. Memory: 640K
Min. Processor: 286

Min. Speed: 10MHz Installation: Optional
Min Hard Disk: 1.4Mb Min. Graphics: CGA
Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Covox, CMS, Tandy
Controls: Mouse, Joystick, Keyboard

Price: £14.99 Out: Now Publisher: Hit Squad Telephone: Ocean 061 832 6633



Peter asks one of the world's more stupid questions.

Hook

EVEN BEFORE *HOOK* had started, Ocean's film conversion had earned a warm spot in my otherwise cold and stony heart. Upon typing A:INSTALL I was presented with one of the most pleasant installation procedures I've had to witness. Lovely, wispy music playing softly in the background while it asked me the simple setup questions and decompressed the files. Charming, simply charming. More music on install programs please Mr Collective Programmers.

Sadly this love affair was all too brief and petered into little more than a one night stand once the game itself got going. For one thing it kept cutting out my mouse. Not straight away, mind you, oh no. It would sneak up on me, let me play happily away for ten or 15 minutes then *wham!* it would pretend it had never heard of a mouse before and throw me into keyboard control with no hope of return.

Neither is it the most user-friendly of adventures. The control interface is just tiresomely fiddly: right-clicking over an object doesn't highlight the most appropriate verb to use as any decent adventure game would do. No, right-clicking in *Hook* highlights the last verb used, which just serves to annoy when you're trying to 'Get' something and the last verb was Talk To. This may sound like nit-picking but it really is annoying, believe me. A friendly interface is paramount to a successful adventure. Just ask LucasArts. It doesn't even have a Quit option and it disables the CTRL-ALT-DEL reset! The only way I could get out of the game was to turn the computer off whilst the program was running! Ocean should not only be thoroughly ashamed of this, they should take their quality control department outside and shoot them all, dead.

One final thing (just before I go). It's not exactly the most gripping tale ever told. The film had great acting talent, marvellous sets and special effects, it just had the most stupifyingly dull story to tell - hence it failed. So, too, does the game by trying to tell that self same story. It has none of the ingenuity seen in the *Indy* games-of-the-films and none of the same sense of atmosphere. There are plenty of better adventures to get lost in, *Hook* being the one they all laugh at and leave off their party invitations. *Paul Presley*

**Possibly the most faithful film conversion around.
The movie was a turkey, so is the game.**

SCORE

35

specs

Min. Memory: 640K
Min. Processor: 286

Min. Speed: 16MHz

Installation: Optional Min Hard Disk: 7Mb

Min. Graphics: VGA Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Roland

Controls: Mouse, Joystick, Keyboard

Price: £12.99 Out: Now Publisher: Hit Squad Telephone: Ocean 061 832 6633



Strange: I can't seem to find any of those huge inflatable life-rafts indicated on my map.

Steel Thunder

DID WE REALLY USED to play games like this? Did we really used to look at screens like these and cry out: 'The graphics are so good'. According to the packaging of *Steel Thunder* we did.

By today's standards the graphics are weak, as is the sound. However, we're in budget land here and allowances can be made. What's really wanted from a budget game is playability and at least there's some of that in *Steel Thunder*. Not a lot, but some.

Anyone who's played *Gunboat* will recognise the basic format of this game. Just swap boats for tanks, change location and it's pretty much the same game. You start as a rookie tank commander and work your way through the ranks by going on a series of raids into enemy territory. Enemy territory being such areas as West Germany, Syria and Cuba. You can control the tank from the position of Gunner, Driver and Commander, switching between the three at the touch of a button. There is also a map screen which gives you an overall view of the battlefield layout.

The manual boasts a technical listing of various American and Soviet tanks and guns which is presumably supposed to give the game more of a sim feel but at its heart this is a shoot 'em-up with enough simulation elements to draw it dangerously towards the land of two stools and the gap in between them.

Rather like *Gunboat*, the basis of *Steel Thunder* is so addictive that you tend to forgive it many of its shortcomings (especially in view of the price). However, it is rather slow for an arcade game while for a simulation the missions are too independent. Although you can progress through the ranks there's no sense of progressing through a campaign. Those of a philosophical bent will start wondering: 'Why am I here? What's it all about?' *Paul Lakin*

Reasonable fun but not one you'd come back to.

SCORE

60

specs

Min. Memory: 640K
Min. Processor: 286

Min. Speed: 16MHz Installation: Optional

Min Hard Disk: N/A Min. Graphics: CGA

Soundcards: PC Speaker

Controls: Mouse, Joystick, Keyboard

Price: £12.99 Out: Now Publisher: Hit Squad Telephone: Ocean 061 832 6633



You try in vain to explain to the inn-keeper why you are wearing a huge white square.

Magic Candle II

AS EASILY IMPRESSED as I am, the very fact that *Magic Candle II* was a budget game on three disks had me ready to give it a hearty pat on the back before I'd even begun to worry about actually playing the chuffing thing. When I had I was still prepared to let it be my friend.

However, the secret of friendship is to see your friends' faults so let's start with those. *Magic Candle II* is not the most innovative game in terms of theme (fairly bog standard quest) or graphics which are of the standard top-down type beloved of early RPGs and which bizarrely represent you as an arrow when you're outside cities. It also possesses some rather strange sound effects. When you walk through the towns there is a loud tramping of boots. This is fine when you've recruited a full party but somewhat disconcerting when you're on your own.

These small niggles apart, *Magic Candle II* is an excellent budget game. As the hero Lukas you journey through the land of Gurtex in search of the 44 guardians of the Magic Candle, recruiting companions to assist you in your quest along the way. There is also a whole host of other characters to communicate with. In fact talking and fighting takes up more of the game than actual puzzle-solving.

The game area is pretty substantial with numerous towns, dungeons and lands to explore. So it's fortunate that *Magic Candle II* comes with a map, which is nice to see in a budget game. There is also an auto-mapping system within the game but, to be honest, it's not really that much help.

Having mentioned the lack of originality in *Magic Candle II*, it is worth pointing out two quite unusual and useful features. Firstly, and most importantly, you are able to take notes along the way which can be read on screen or printed out for you to study at your leisure. Secondly, when the party camps it's not just an excuse for 40 winks but enables characters to carry out repairs and all those other useful tasks that can't be done on the move.

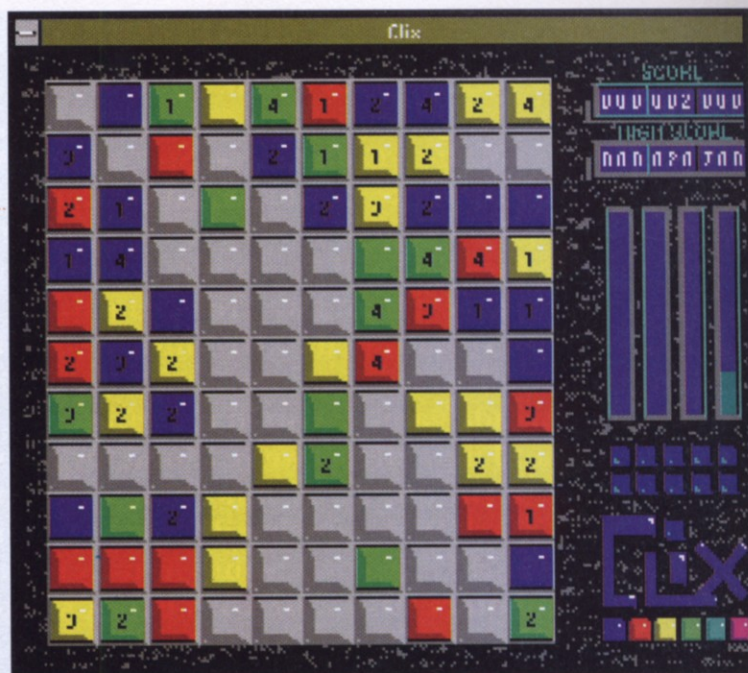
All in all *Magic Candle II* is a very competent, very playable RPG of impressive size. Not stunningly original but full of interesting features and hours of gameplay. The ideal budget game in fact. *Paul Lakin*

Good as an RPG, excellent as a budget.

SCORE
80

specs Min. Memory: 512K
Min. Processor: 286
Min. Speed: 16MHz Installation: Optional
Min Hard Disk: 4-5 Mb Min. Graphics: EGA
Soundcards: Ad-Lib, Sound Blaster, Roland
Controls: Keyboard

Price: £14.99 Out: Now Publisher: Hit Squad Telephone: (Ocean) 061 832 6633



Windows puzzle game involving coloured tiles. How, erm, original.

Clix

CLIX IS THE FIRST in a new range of budget releases from The Genesis Arcade. Aimed at Windows users, the titles are simple arcade-style games that can be used in Windows as another window (it's a bit like double glazing really).

The object of this mouse-driven puzzle game is to make lines or squares of matching coloured blocks, much in the way of games like *Columns*, except the blocks don't drop down the screen but are placed randomly in a grid instead. There is a short period of time for you to play the game, and then the computer generates more blocks. This continues until the entire grid is so full that no more blocks can be laid, at which point your game is over. The different colours are rotated on each block by clicking on them (could this possibly have anything to do with the name *Clix*?), and each individual block has a maximum number of times it can be clicked on (represented by a number on the block). As lines and squares are formed they disappear, giving you a bit of breathing space. Blank squares in the grid can also be clicked on: these generate other randomly coloured blocks.

The press release states that these are '... games in the old tradition. The sort of games which probably drew you into computing in the first place via old friends like the ZX Spectrum, the Atari or the Amstrad CPC...' The truth of this can be seen as soon as you lay your hands on the mouse and start to play. The way that the game slows down when you click on a block while running on a 25MHz 486 is pretty pathetic. Apart from that the game is almost impossible to play properly: I got two levels further by rampaging round the screen clicking on everything I could, as opposed to playing in the 'correct' manner. Maybe this just says something for my gamesplaying ability, but in the case of *Clix* it appears that the game is just badly designed.

The graphics and sound are best described as 'functional', but games like this don't require anything over the top in this area; they just need to play well. Unfortunately this doesn't.

If you're terminally addicted to puzzle games this game is a possibility. However, most people will find it too annoying to bother with, even with such a low price tag. *Tom Rees-Herdman*

Verdict Nice idea, shame about the gameplay.

SCORE
62

specs Min. Memory: 2 Mb
Min. Processor: 286
Min. Speed: 12MHz Installation: Essential
Min Hard Disk: 1Mb Min. Graphics: VGA
Soundcards: Sound Blaster and Ad-Lib (optional)
Controls: Mouse only Comments: Needs windows

Price: £14.99 Out: Now Publisher: The Genesis Arcade Telephone: 0295 258 335



symposium. A meeting. A think-tank. A bibliography. A library. An annal. These words, and indeed many more, are apt in describing this: The HackMaster™ Conference. Spread over several issues, this collection of hacks, cracks, cheats and amusing silly little effects we've discovered in games will cover PC gamesdom from start to finish. It will be arranged in little genre-listed sections, starting with (and we are loathe to say the word) RPGs, and then spiralling daintily into Flight Sims, Space Sims, Puzzle and Strategy games, Sports Sims, Shareware games and Arcade games. Also in the offing are updates, corrections and new effects we've found for games, culminating in the quite awesome, bowel jettisoning HackMaster™ Hack Disk, which will be packed with all the hacks in the world plus numerous character editors, trainers and games adapters. Also wait, with barely sucked back in ropes of saliva, for the *X-Wing* ship designer, the *Space Hulk* mega hack, the *Flashback* trainer, the *Star Control 2* mega melée upgrade, and hosts of other entertaining and lovely hexadecimal things.

The HackMasters™ are (in hierarchical order):
David McCandless, Network, Johnathon Mell, and Brian Oxley.

To get these hacks to work, we will refer you directly to the HackMaster™ Troubleshooter columns, and the directions for *debug*, *Xtree* Gold and PC Tools within.

REQUEST STOP

If you wish to request a particular hack for a game which you think deserves the 'HackMaster™' treatment' then write in, as soon as you are able, to: HackMasters™, We Lie Prostrate Before You Licky Licky, PC Zone, 19 Bolsover Street, London, W1P 1DE. We cannot supply specific effects or hacks but we can, at the drop of a hat, produce offset and cheats for specific games.

RPGS

This month we, the HackMasters™, kick off with role-playing games and all manner of games which fall, however haphazardly, under this rather scabrous, rather contemptible banner. Search down the list in alphabetical order to find the hacks for *Underworld*, *Eye Of The Beholder III*, *Clouds Of Xeen*, and all the *Ultima* games you could possibly fit in your basket. Have, as they say, fun.

BETRAYAL AT KRONDOR (Dynamix)

Although huge in America this RPG seems to have suffered somewhat 'over the pond'. We think it's because it's too hard to early. So to redress the balance, try out the HackMaster™ 'make the game a little easier and therefore more accessible' hack (as we catchily subtitle it).

Save your game in slot one, quit out, and then backup the file SAVE01.GAM. Use *debug*:

>NSAVE01.GAM

>L

>E 01E3 FF FF FF	Max health char 1
>E 02A1 FF FF FF	Max health char 2
>E 0242 FF FF FF	Max health char 3
>E 01E8 FF FF FF	Max stamina char 1
>E 02A6 FF FF FF	Max stamina char 2
>E 0243 FF FF FF	Max stamina char 3
>E 01ED 63 63 63	Speed char 1
>E 02AB 63 63 63	Speed char 2
>E 024C 63 63 63	Speed char 3
>E 01F2 63 63 63	Strength char 1
>E 02B0 63 63 63	Strength char 2
>E 0251 63 63 63	Strength char 3
>E 0167 80	Money (lots of)

>W

>Q

To subtly change the individual skill, look up the addresses for each character in this table and put a short sharp 63 into them:

SKILL	CHAR 1	CHAR 2	CHAR 3
Defence	01F7	02B5	0256

Crossbow	01FC	02BA	025B
Melée	0201	02BF	0260
Casting	0206	02C4	0265
Assessment	020B	02C	026A
Armour	0210	02CE	026F
Weapon	0215	02D3	0274
Barding	021A	02D8	0279
Haggling	021F	02DD	027E
Lockpicking	0224	02E2	0283
Scouting	0229	02E7	0288
Stealth	022E	02EC	028D

So, for instance, you're stuck at a crossroads with a difficult locked chest and a some enemies within targetting range, save the game, quit out and *debug*:

>NSAVE01.GAM

>L

>E 0224 63

>E 02BA 63

>W

>Q

Lockpick char 1
Crossbow char 2

CLOUDS OF XEEN (New World Computing)

Save the team you wish to be changed into slot one, quit out, backup the file XEEN01.SAV and then *debug*, using the following commands:

>NXEEN01.SAV

>L

>E 0BDF v

>E 0BE1 v

>E 24C3 v

Hit points char 1
Spell points char 1
Hit points char 2

THE HACKMASTER™


```
>E 2405 v      Spell points char 2
>E 1F3B v      Hit points char 3
>E 1F3D v      Spell points char 3
>E 1B15 v      Hit points char 4
>E 1B17 v      Spell points char 4
>E 0D41 v      Hit points char 5
>E 0D43 v      Spell points char 5
>E 142B v      Hit points char 6
>E 142D v      Spell points char 6
>E 366F 5A     5 days worth of food
>E 3683 E8 FD  65,000 gold pieces
>W
>Q
```

Load in your sector thing and edit the following address (if you make a mistake, just re-enter the original bytes listed). For immunity from damage:

```
Edit 2240DH
Original bytes: 26 29 87 56 01
Change to:      90 90 90 90 90
```

And for infinite spell points:

```
Edit 324D1H
Original bytes: 26 29 8F 58 01
Change to:      90 90 90 90 90
```

Write the changes to disk and play as normal.

CAPTIVE (Mindscape)

Old but gold, as they say in the cliché world. A challenging game for TruePlayers™ and HackMasters™ alike. On the TruePlaying™ side, a difficult dungeon layout, tough robo nasties and later, randomly created dungeons give it a certain spiciness. For us, The HackMasters™, a small 'change detector' in the savegame gave us pause (two or three seconds) for thought. Anyway, backup the file CAPTIVE.SAV and then follow these tables to build up your ideal hack.

ATTRIBUTE	DROID 1	DROID 2	DROID 3	DROID 4
Robotics	305D	316B	3279	3387
Brawling	305E	316C	327A	3388
Swords	305F	316D	327B	3389
Handgun	3060	316E	327C	338A
Rifles	3061	316F	327D	338B
Automatics	3062	3170	327E	338C
Lasers	3063	3171	327F	338D
Cannons	3064	3172	3280	338E
Spray guns	3065	3173	3281	338F
Dexterity	3066	3174	3282	3390
Vitality	3067	3175	3283	3391
Wisdom	3068	3176	3284	3392
Hit points	3091	319F	32AD	33BB
Experience	3080	318E	329C	33AB
	3081	318F	329D	33AC
	3082	3190	329E	33AD

The next table is a bit more complicated; it gives you the addresses to stock up on the body part hit points. The number following the address (e.g. 311C/4), in this case '4', is the number of 'FF's you must place into the address when you debug (e.g. E 311C FF FF FF FF).

ATTRIBUTE	DROID 1	DROID 2	DROID 3	DROID 4
Hit points	311C/4	3228/8	3336/9	3444/12
On all	3120/16	3230/16	3340/16	3450/16
Body	3130/16	3240/16	3350/14	3460/12
Parts	3140/2	-	-	-

This last table (for power drain per droid) works the same except you must put '00's into the address instead of 'FF's.

ATTRIBUTE	DROID 1	DROID 2	DROID 3	DROID 4
Power	3142/14	3250/16	335D/2	346C/4
Drain	3150/16	3260/16	3360/16	3470/16
From	3160/11	3270/9	3370/16	3480/16
Batteries	-	-	3380/7	3490/5

This, you may have noticed, seems quite long-winded and complicated. This is because it is long-winded and complicated. But here is an example for a player who feels that droid 1 needs a renaissance in-game. In debug:

```
>NXXXXX.XX
>L
>E 305D 63      100 robotics level
>E 3066 63      100 dexterity
>E 311C 00 00 00 00
```

The following lines for Hit Points

```
>E 3120 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00
00 00 00 00 00 00
>E 3130 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00
00 00 00 00 00 00
>E 3160 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00 00
00
```

```
>W
```

```
>Q
```

CRUSADERS OF THE DARK SAVANTE (US Gold)

Some of you may still be playing this. Some of you have probably played it and then got stuck and then stopped playing it. Some of you may have eyed it at a second hand store and are contemplating playing it. But listen, you are being warned: this hack will totally and irredeemably spoil the gameplay of this game. It will up all your stats to max, give you all spells at maximum power, allow you read the minds of other characters, enable you to 'hide' with 100 percent invisibility, swim long distances and basically do everything. You have been warned.

Play the game as normal, save your game, quit out and then backup the file SAVEGAME.DBS. Now, using the tables below, adapt your team to suit your specific criteria (i.e. hack like a ninja).

Firstly, put FF 05 eight times (i.e. FF 05 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05) into the following address for supreme magical ability:

CHAR 1	CHAR 2	CHAR 3	CHAR 4	CHAR 5	CHAR 6
2D10	2F40	31A0	33E0	3620	3870
2D20	2F50	31B0	33F0	3630	3880
2D30	2F60	31C0	3400	3640	3890
2DC0	2F70	3200	3410	3650	38A0
2DE0	2F80	3210	3420	3660	38A0
2DF0	2F90	3430		3670	
2E00	2FA0	3440		3680	
2E10	2FB0				
2E20	2FC0				
2E30	2FD0				
	2FE0				
	2FF0				
	3000				
	3010				

Now for wonder stats enter FF 16 times into the following address:

CHAR 1	CHAR 2	CHAR 3	CHAR 4	CHAR 5	CHAR 6
2E40	3020	3220	3450	3690	38B0
2E50	3030	3230	3460	36A0	38C0

2E60	3040	3240	3470	36B0	38D0
2E70	3050	3250	3480	36C0	38E0
2E80	3060	3260	3490	36D0	38F0
2E90	30A0	3270	34A0	36E0	3900
2EA0	30B0	3280	34B0	36F0	3910
	30C0	3290	34D0	3700	3920
	30D0	32A0	34E0	3710	3930
	30E0	32B0	34F0	3720	3940
	30F0	32C0	3500	3730	3950
		32D0	3510	3740	3960
		32E0	3520	3750	3970
		32F0	3530	3760	3980
		3300	3540	3770	3990
		3310	3550	3790	39B0
		3320	3560	37A0	39E0
		3330	3570	37B0	39F0
		3340	3590	3840	3A10
		33B0	35F0		3A20
					3A80

So, if you're using debug, and you want to enhance character three's magic ability, then run it and:

```
>NSAVEGAME.DBS
```

```
>L
```

```
>E 31A0 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05
FF 05 FF 05 FF 05
```

```
>E 31B0 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05
FF 05 FF 05 FF 05
```

```
>E 31C0 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05
FF 05 FF 05 FF 05
```

```
>E 3200 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05
FF 05 FF 05 FF 05
```

```
>E 3210 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05 FF 05
FF 05 FF 05 FF 05
```

```
>W
```

```
>Q
```

DARKSIDE OF XEEN (New World Computing)

For a hack for this Xeen world mega-compendium style thing, rewind a small distance to the Clouds Of Xeen hacks (it works for both).

ESCAPE FROM HELL (Dynamix)

We're not sure what this game is or even if it is still available, but it sounds like an RPG and that, as you know, is motive enough to provide a hackette for it. To skip levels, backup the file SAVEGAME and then use debug:

```
>NSAVEGAME
```

```
>L
```

```
>E 0101 v      v = levels 1-6
```

```
>W
```

```
>Q
```

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER III (US Gold)

We've had quite a few requests for a hack for the disappointing final instalment of the Beholder trilogy. We know: why don't you save a game in slot one and then exit? Enter the directory savegame and backup the file ITEMS_01.BIN and then debug:

```
>NITEMS_01.BIN
```

```
>L
```

```
>E 0462 FF 05      Mega-hit points char 1
```

```
>E 0464 FF 05      Mega max-HPS char 1
```



```

>E 06D5 FF 05
>E 06D7 FF 05
>E 0948 FF 05
>E 094A FF 05
>E 0BBB FF 05
>E 0BBD FF 05
>E 0476 13 63
>E 06E9 13 63
>E 095C 13 63
>E 0BCF 13 63
>E 047A 63 63

>E 06ED 63 63
>E 0960 63 63
>E 0BD3 63 63
>E 045A 10 10 10
>E 06CD 10 10 10
>E 0940 10 10 10
>E 0BB3 10 10 10
>W
>Q
  
```

ISHAR (Silmarils/Daze)

A worthwhile attempt at an outside RPG which suffers a) by being French and therefore b) a little 'weird'. Nevertheless, we had a go. Save a game in slot one, backup and debug:

```

>NGAME01.SAV
>E 02D5 FF      255 vitality
>E 02DF FF      Lots of money
>E 02E9 FF      255 psy
>E 03E2 7F      Level 128
>E 03E7 7F      Max strength
>E 03EC 7F      Max wisdom
>E 03F1 7F      Max constitution
>E 03F6 33      Max agility
>E 03FB 33      Max intelligence
>E 03FF 1F      Good range of skills
>E 0400 77      Max physical
>E 0405 77      Max mental
>W
>Q
  
```

KEEF THE THIEF (Electronic Arts)

This is a very old game, but it has exerted a strong and important historical influence. Way, way back in the four-colour mists of PC time, this was one of the first 'adventures' (a synonym for RPG if we ever heard one) which was er, 'funny'. Since then, of course, 'funny' has become industry standard for adventures (*Monkey Island*, *Day Of The Tentacle*), most of which, naturally, fail dismally in their 'funniness'. So to reach the later gags in *Keef*, backup the file sg and then debug:

```

>NSG
>L
>E 0102 FF
>E 0104 FF
>E 0106 FF
>E 0108 FF
>E 010A FF
>E 010C FF
>E 0114 FF
>E 0116 FF
>E 0118 FF
>E 011E FF
>E 011A FF 6F
  
```

These will plump all the stats up to a whopping 255

Lots of money

```

>E 011C FF 6F      Lots of magic points
>W
>Q
  
```

LANDS OF LORE (Virgin)

See the HackMasters™ section this month for a full mega-hack for this fun, flick-screen fantasy frolic.

LEGENDS OF VALOUR (US Gold)

For a more affluent start in the *Valour* society, create your character and then savegame it in slot one. Quit out and backup the file CHAR09.DAT. Enter debug and, pressing return after every line, type:

```

>NCHAR09.DAT
>L
>E 0122 63
>E 0123 63
>W
>Q
  
```

LEGEND (publisher)

Save the game into slot zero (nought, zilch etc.), exit and backup the file EMPIRE00.SAV. Then debug:

```

>NEMPIRE00.SAV
>L
>E 0126 FF 00 FF      255 Hit points char 1
>E 01A6 FF 00 FF      255 Hit points char 2
>E 0226 FF 00 FF      255 Hit points char 3
>E 02A6 FF 00 FF      255 Hit points char 4
>E 0116 63            Strength char 1
>E 0196 63            Strength char 2
>E 0216 63            Strength char 3
>E 02A6 63            Strength char 4
>W
>Q
  
```

LEISURE SUIT LARRY III (Sierra)

This cheat was sent in to us, minus any kind of cause-effect documentation. So what it does is anybody's guess. Begin the game and enter your age as 25. When the first question is given, hold down alt and CTRL and then press X.

POOL OF RADIANCE (US Gold)

Where would RPGs be without the old Gold Box series eh? Its poor graphics, bad sound, limited gameplay paved the way for *Ultima Underworld* and its ilk to mop up the RPG market. But if you're still playing this on your XT, then save your adventure game in slot one and then exit. Backup the file CHRDATA.01 and then debug:

```

>NCHRDATA.01
>L
>E 0154 FF      255 Hit
>E 0134 FF      Points
>E 01AC FF FF    Loads of xp
>E 0190 16 43    Loads of money
>W
>Q
  
```

SHADOWLANDS (Krysalis)

Play the game as per normal, save a game called 'cheat' and then exit to bos. Backup the file CHEAT.SAV and then debug:

```

>NHEAT.SAV
>L
>E 1B48 05 14      Char 1
  
```

```

>E 1B4A 77 77 77 77 77
>E 1B4E 77 77 63 63
>E 1B53 77 77 77
>E 1B56 FF FF FF FF FF
>E 1B5B FF FF FF FF FF
>E 1B60 EE EE EE EE
>E 1B64 EE EE EE EE
>E 1BEA 05 14
>E 1BEC 77 77 77 77
>E 1BF1 77 77 63 63
>E 1BF5 77 77 77
>E 1BF9 FF FF FF FF FF
>E 1BFE FF FF FF FF FF
>E 1C02 EE EE EE EE
>E 1C06 EE EE EE EE
>E 1C80 05 14
>E 1C8E 77 77 77 77 77
>E 1C93 77 77 63 63
>E 1C97 77 77 77
>E 1C9A FF FF FF FF FF
>E 1C9F FF FF FF FF FF
>E 1CA4 EE EE EE EE
>E 1CA8 EE EE EE EE
>E 1D2E 05 14
>E 1D30 77 77 77 77 77
>E 1D35 77 77 63 63
>E 1D39 77 77 77
>E 1D3C FF FF FF FF FF
>E 1D41 FF FF FF FF FF
>E 1D46 EE EE EE EE
>E 1D4A EE EE EE EE
>W
>Q
  
```

Char 2

Char 3

Char 4

SHADOWWORLDS (Krysalis)

Load the game as normal and when you're on death's door, save a game as CHEAT.SAV. Quit out and debug:

```

>NHEAT.SAV
>L
>E 0276 v      Health char 1
>E 02A6 v      Health char 2
>E 02D6 v      Health char 3
>E 0206 v      Health char 4
>W
>Q
  
```

THE SUMMONING (US Gold)

Start the game and once you've designed your character then save the game (in the first slot) and quit out. Change into the saves directory, backup the file D201.SAV and then edit it. Find the name of your character and from the start of the name count the bytes and edit the following:

BYTE	EFFECT	RANGE
80	Current hit points	Enter 05FFH for 1535 HPS
82	Maximum hit points	Same as above
84	Current spell points	Ditto
86	Max SPs	And again
88	Armour class	0-FFH (0-255)
90	Strength	0-63H (0-99)
91	Agility	0-63
92	Endurance	0-63
93	Accuracy	0-63
94	Talent	0-63
95	Power	0-63
96	Maximum strength	0-63

THE HACKMASTER™

97	Max AG	0-63
98	Max END	0-63
99	Max ACC	0-63
100	Max TAL	0-63
101	Max PWR	0-63

ULTIMA UNDERWORLD (Electronic Arts/Origin)

Save your game at any stage in slot one. Quit the game, enter the save1 directory and backup the file PLAYER.DAT. Then, using *debug* enter the following commands:

```
>NPLAYER.DAT
>L
>E 011F v Strength
>E 0120 v Dexterity
>E 0121 v Vitality
>E 0122 v Attack
>E 0123 v Defence
>E 0124 v Barehand
>E 0125 v Sword
>E 0126 v Axe
>E 0127 v Mace
>E 0128 v Missile
>E 0129 v Mana
>E 012A v Lore
>E 012B v Casting
>E 012C v Traps
>E 012D v Search
>E 012E v Track
>E 012F v Stealth
>E 0130 v Repair
>E 0136 v Vitality
>E 0137 v Max vitality
>E 0138 v Mana
>E 0139 v Max mana
>E 013E v Level
>E 01DD FF 255 units of energy
>W
>Q
```

Refer to the *Underworld II* hack to understand how to 'work' this hack.

ULTIMA UNDERWORLD II (Electronic Arts/Origin)

The method is exactly the same as *Underworld I*. Play the game and when you begin to sweat, save the game in slot one. Quit out and change into the SAVE1 directory. Backup the file PLAYER.DAT. Then *debug*:

```
>NPLAYER.DAT
>L
>E 011F v Strength
>E 0120 v Dexterity
>E 0121 v Vitality
>E 0122 v Attack
>E 0123 v Defence
>E 0124 v Barehand
>E 0125 v Sword
>E 0126 v Axe
>E 0127 v Mace
>E 0128 v Missile
>E 0129 v Mana
>E 012A v Lore
>E 012B v Casting
>E 012C v Traps
```

```
>E 012D v Search
>E 012E v Track
>E 012F v Stealth
>E 0130 v Repair
>E 0131 v Charisma
>E 0132 v Picklock
>E 0133 v Acrobat
>E 0134 v Appraise
>E 0135 v Swimming
>E 0136 v Vitality
>E 0137 v Max vitality
>E 0138 v Mana
>E 0139 v Max mana
>E 013E v Level
>E 03DD FF 255 Vitality
>W
```

Right, this is quite complicated so listen carefully. Origin use a clever encryption routine to encode their savegame. It revolves vaguely around the length of the players name. So, as most peoples' characters will have varying names, the possibility of a generic hack is limited. So, what you must do is increment the 'v' figure for each line until you reach the figure you want. We know, we know - we're loosing you. It works like this. Say, you want to increase your level. Debug and follow the 'N' and 'L' commands and then type:

```
E 013E [RETURN]
something like this will appear:
01FB:013E 3A.
```

This '3A' is your level encrypted (the figure will vary enormously; it could be FE, or 10, or 68 or anything). Just simply add one to it to increase you level and keep adding one to it until you reach the value you want. So, if you want to increase your level by two, do:

```
E 013E 3C
```

which is 3A plus two. Confused? We thought as much. Experimentation is the key.

ULTIMA VI (Origin)

Talk to Iolo. Say 'spam', 'spam', 'spam' and then 'humbug'. Again, this is one of those esoteric undocumented cheats. Try it out and see.

ULTIMA VII (Electronic Arts/Origin)

This cheat changes no data permanently so no backuping is necessary. To activate the cheat run *Ultima 7* like this:

```
ULTIMA7 ABCDv
```

where v is the control code for ASCII character 255. To enter the code hold down alt and type 255 on the numeric key pad. Release alt and then press return. The game will run as normal but now the following keys have some esoteric effects:

F2	Cheat system	Shows the cheat mode menu
F3	Go to Map location	Point and click on the map to reach that location.
F5	Cast Spell	Enter the spell number and press RETURN
F8	Read	Type number of sign, book or whatever and press RETURN
ALT-1	Sound effect test	Type a number and press RETURN

ALT-2 Sprite test Type a number and press RETURN

Experimentation is obviously the key here. But remember nothing you do can damage your game.

ULTIMA VII Pt 2 (Electronic Arts/Origin)

To activate the cheat run the game by typing:

```
SERPENT PASS
```

with a space between the two words. The game will run as per usual but now use the following 'hot-keys' during the game:

F2 then	B	Shows NPC info
	N	Tag NPC with number
	T	Teleport to NPC
	S	Set time/date of Britannia
	+/-	Increase/decrease time speed
	L	Current location
	I	Examine NPC
	M	Modify NPC (dangerous)
	C	Create item
F3		Go to map location (point 'n' click)
F5		Cast spell (type spell and then enter)
F8		Read object - type number and then enter
ALT-1		Sound effect test - type number and enter
ALT-2		Sprite effect test - as above
ALT-3		Music test - ditto

This cheat can't corrupt your game data but may have some adverse effects on your saved games, so back 'em up. The HackMasters™ are not responsible.

VEIL OF DARKNESS (US Gold)

Save a game in slot one and then backup the file SAVENAME.DBS. Quit out and run *debug* using the following offsets:

```
>NSAVENAME.DBS
>L
>E 5259 FF 255 Hit points
>E 525B FF 255 Max HPs
>E 52BA FF 09 255 kg ENCUMBRANCE
>W
>Q
```

WORLDS OF LEGENDS (Mindscape)

See the *Legend* hack.

UPDATES

Here's a little update hackeroo for the most excellent *Flashback*. There'll be more of these new effects in the coming instalments of the HackMaster's™ Conference. Enter the FB/DATA directory and backup the file LEVEL01.TGE. Now *debug*:

```
>NLEVEL01.TGE
>L
>E 010A FF 255 lives
>W
>Q
```

Or, using PC Tools and Xtree Gold, search out the bytes in the FB.EXE file:

```
F6 C6 08 74 05 C7 44 08 FF FF
and change it to:
F6 C6 08 EB 05 C7 44 08 FF FF
for the ability to fall from any height.
```


CD-ROM

REVIEW

This month Sierra launches a new concept in CD-ROM marketing, while **Laurence Scottford** and **Paul Lakin** finally wipe off their hi-tech CD coffee mats and review them. We've also time to give you our own sneak peek of what's going to be hot in the run-up to Christmas.

Jutland

A

LTHOUGH I'M something of a fan of naval simulators (pause while reviewer manfully struggles against urge to make joke about navel simulators) and, yawney old history bore that I am, have always been interested in the First World War I'm afraid my main reaction to this piece of software is: 'why?'

Why should a CD product with graphics that are good but not outstanding take up 25Mb of hard disk space. Even the floppy version of *Return To Zork* didn't take up that much space. Once the game is up and running it only seems to access the the CD for the occasional 'action' graphic and some tedious cinema sequences.

A slightly more pedantic criticism is why base a game on the actions of two fleets who spent much of the time trying to avoid each other (since they could 'lose the war in an afternoon') apart from one indecisive conflict: Jutland itself.

Theory apart there is the makings of a very good game here. As Captain, Squadron Leader or Fleet Commander you work your way through progressively more complex and challenging operations until you reach Jutland itself. The difference between ranks dictates whether you're in charge of one ship, a squadron or the fleet.

Having received your orders you can view the lie of the land (or sea) in the ops room, where you can plot your course. During battle you can flick between the bridge, the gun room and the torpedo room as well as checking on damage, controlling fires, using binoculars and, if you have charge of more than one ship, sending signals to the fleet.

Once you're into the game *Jutland* is pretty good fun and had me sitting by the screen late into the night. What lets it down are all the bells and whistles which are presumably there to justify the game being on CD but do little more than slow it down. At the start of the game you get inane jokes along the lines of: 'We apologise for the delay, this is due to the inebriation of the projectionist' to justify the delay before some interesting-first-time period footage.

Yet, although the CD is used for all these little visual joys, it misses the opportunity to really add to the game. If your ship is sunk there is a dramatic explosion at the bridge but prior to that there no sign of any damage. Would it have been that much trouble to have a number of stills of the bridge in varying states of destruction so you could really sense you were taking a pounding?

In the end, despite its occasional irritations *Jutland* is a reasonably enjoyable game. Personally I think it would have been better if it had been released on floppy with less graphics to get in the way of the gameplay. *Paul Lakin*

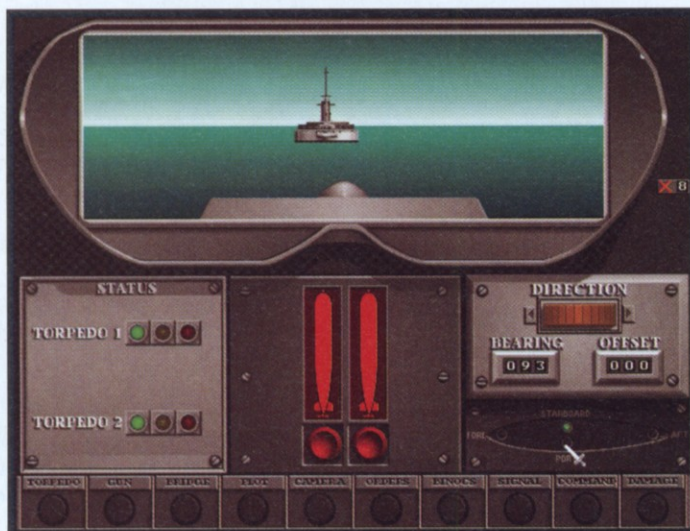
Good but there are too many unnecessary gimmicks.

SCORE
72

specs Min. Memory: 640K + 4Mb RAM Min. Processor: 386DX Min. Speed: 25MHz Installation: Essential Min. Hard Disk Space: 20Mb Min. Graphics: VGA Soundcards Supported: Sound Blaster, Pro Audio Spectrum Controls: Keyboard, Mouse Comments: Needs PC CD-ROM drive

Price: £59.99 Out: Now. Publisher: On-Line Entertainment Tel: 081 558 6114

(Right) Sardine can off the starboard bow sir! The 3D sequences in *Jutland* have a long way to go before they can match even those in the ancient *Silent Service II*. (Below Right) Sod this for a game of sailors - Anyone for a game of Subbuteo? The chart screen is where you'll spend most of your time during battles.





And then there were three...

Gobliiins

COKTEL IS TYPICAL of French software publishers inasmuch as its wares are always superbly presented, very original, very quirky but, more often than not, a little lacking in enduring gameplay. The *Gobliins* games of which there are now three, is no exception.

These cartoon-like puzzle games feature a diminishing number of mischievous goblins, each with different skills, who must co-operate to solve single-screen puzzles. The reason I say diminishing is that with each successive game you lose a goblin: a fact that is also indicated by the typographical trick of calling the games *Gobliiins*, *Gobliins* and *Goblins* respectively.

This is the CD version of the first, and frankly, the least satisfactory of the games. The three goblins are Oups, who can collect and use objects, Asgard, who hits things, and Ignatius, who can cast spells.

Your ultimate objective is to seek out the irritable wizard Niak and persuade him to find a remedy for the madness of the king Angoulafre. This entails travelling through many screens, or arrays as the manual refers to them, each of which presents the goblins with a puzzle to be solved before they can move on to the next.

The trouble is that there seems to have been very little logic applied to the construction of the puzzles. The player tends to end up resorting to trial and error, which makes for a very tedious game. You know you are going to get to the solution eventually, but getting there is not a particularly interesting process.

Although it is bundled with demos of *Gobliins 2*, *Gobliins 3*, *Ween*, *Inca* and *Lost In Time*, this game alone has little appeal. I would have preferred to have seen Coktel release a CD with all three of the *Gobliins* games together. Laurence Scotford

An unimproved CD version of an original but uninspired game.

SCORE

50

specs

Min. Memory: 640K

Min. Processor: 8086

(286 Or better recommended Min. Speed: 8MHz

Installation: Essential Min. Hard Disk Space:

3.5Mb Min. Graphics: VGA Soundcards

Supported: Ad-Lib, Pro Audio Spectrum, Sound Blaster, MDO Intersound Controls: Mouse

Sierra's Sneak Peeks



IT IS ALREADY de rigeur for game publishers to fill up all the free space on CDs with demos of their forthcoming products, but Sierra has now taken this trend just one step further and come up with a CD containing nothing but demos.

Containing over 20 interactive or rolling demos of existing and forthcoming software, this is a cost effective way of

determining which Sierra releases are worth putting on your wish list. The disk is expected to sell at less than £10.00 from most outlets, and when you consider that each of the products featured will cost you upwards of £30.00, the money you pay for this disk could easily save you a small fortune.

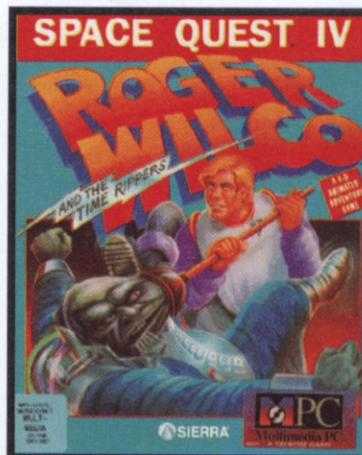
The disk doesn't just feature Sierra's homegrown products, but also those from its affiliated companies, Dynamix, Bright Star and Coktel, so you get a wide range of product on the same disk: everything from education and puzzle games to graphic adventures.

An added bonus is the presence of a starter kit for the Sierra network. In theory, this will enable you, provided you have the necessary hardware, to hook up to Sierra's bulletin board and take part in its multi-player games. In practice this is not going to be of much interest to European gamers, unless of course you are incredibly rich and accustomed to playing games at two o'clock in the morning.

There isn't really that much more to say about this disk other than that it's been superbly presented, is very easy to use and a brilliant idea that other major publishers should follow. If you're a fan of Sierra or have yet to sample its games and want to know whether or not they are your cup of tea, this is a worthwhile investment. Laurence Scotford

specs

The demos on this disk all have individual technical requirements, but as long as you have at least a 386SX with a VGA card, you should be able to run some of them.



The two guys from *Andromeda* skewer science fiction and the computer software industry in this CD-ROM outer-space comedy. Roger Wilco is recruited to save his home planet from a threat from the distant future, and must dodge the Sequel Police long enough to defeat his arch-rival! Features the voice of Laugh-In's Gary Owens!

Press ANY KEY to continue



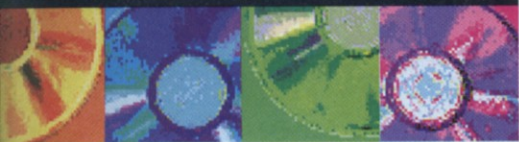
When the Incredible Machine meets the Saturday Morning cartoons, the result is an outrageous, mind-bending series of comical puzzles with ingenious solutions. Over 70 animated puzzle plants and 20 new puzzles (not to mention a custom puzzle builder) make for an addictive puzzle game that lets you construct your own crazy cartoon!

Press ANY KEY to continue

For less than a tenner you can try out *Space Quest 5* and *Incredible Toons* which are both included in Sierra's Sneak Peeks. If you like 'em, buy 'em.

Price: £10.00 or less Out: Now Publisher: Sierra Telephone: 0734 303322





Inca II



IF YOU BOTHERED to read last month's *Bulletin* you'll have seen a mention of *Inca II*. Now we've seen more of the game and it's looking smarter by the minute. As with the original the game it's dripping with excellent

graphics. In fact the in-game graphics, particularly those on the planet itself are of such high quality it's hard to believe they were drawn rather than digitised. The action is interspersed with cinematic cuts to illustrate both

events (explosions etc.) or conversations (using actors, digitised speech and the like). There are some impressive fractal landscapes that you might want to cut out and hang on your wall and you can make use of a video feature to watch parts of the game you've already played.

However, if we've said it once we've said it twice: great graphics are no guarantee of a great game, so Coktel Vision have adopted a 'variety is the spice of life' approach.

Fly by night

The initial action of *Inca II* takes place in space as the hot-headed Atahualpa sets off to do battle with a meteor (or something equally foolhardy). There are three different ships available: The Tumi, The Boomerang and a three mast space vessel.

The game automatically adjusts the difficulty level and the length of combat sequences once it realises just how crap you are. Not all the action is in space:

as well as shoot-outs with conquistadors and Aguirre's allies there's that stand-by of all action films – the fight on the train.

Problems, problems, problems.

Inca II is an AA game, action and adventure. At certain stages of the game you'll have the choice of progressing by either solving a puzzle or two or blasting your way into the action phases. However, there'll be times when there's nothing for it but to scratch your head and act like Edward de Bono, father of lateral thinking and U2's lead singer.

Give us an Inca – ling

The graphics we've seen in *Inca II* so far have been outstanding; the gameplay seems to be shaping up pretty nicely too. Will it all hang together? All you've got to do is hang on til next month to find out in our full review. *Paul Lakin*

specs Min. Processor: 386 Min. Speed: 25MHz
Min. Graphics: 256 colour VGA Soundcards
Supported: Sound Blaster, ThunderBoard and compatibles or Ad-Lib
Controls: Microsoft compatible mouse Comments: Needs CD-ROM driver with audio output



Price: £54.99 Out: Now Publisher: Coktel Vision Telephone: 0276 684959



Blimey! He'll be breathing garlic next.

Dracula Unleashed



NOT TO BE CONFUSED with the game of the film, *Dracula Unleashed* on CD-ROM – to be released in October – is an original story containing 90 minutes of video. It's ten years since the death of Dracula and Quincey Morris, the man who drove the stake into his heart, has died. Prompted by a letter from a Romanian Priest, his brother Alexander has come to England to investigate the circumstances surrounding the death.

The game is an adventure following in the tradition of the *Sherlock Holmes* CDs but considerably more sophisticated (the whole thing was shot as a film in a studio, complete with special effects) and considerably more violent (the game is being submitted to the BBFC). Complete with approximately seven multiple paths and the worst cockney accents since Dick van Dyke, *Dracula Unleashed* will retail for £49.99. *Paul Lakin*



specs Min. Memory: 4Mb Min. Processor: 386
Min. Speed: 25MHz Installation: No
Min. Hard Disk Space: A little if you want to save games
Min. Graphics: SVGA Soundcards Supported: Sound Blaster
Controls: Mouse

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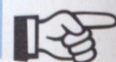
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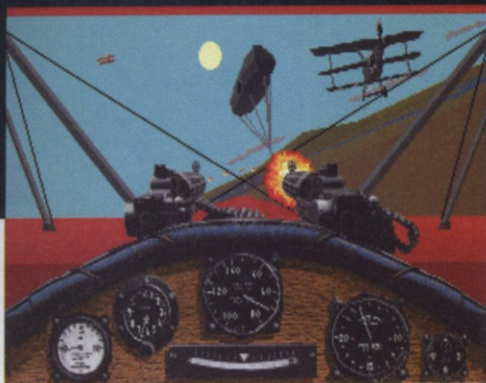
DO THE WRIGHT THING

Flight sims flow through the *PC Zone* office faster than All-Bran through the alimentary canal of somebody suffering from dysentery. This means that **Duncan MacDonald** has seen, and played, just about every single flying game on the market.

Here he has a look at the few of the best.

(And a couple of the worst.)





WORLD WAR ONE

Knights Of The Sky (MicroProse)

What you might call a fully rounded game, with fab graphics and bags of atmosphere. The extensive options screen allows you to try numerous quickstart missions (dogfights, trench bombing, zeppelin attacks and so on) in any one of the many planes on offer. Once you've exhausted the missions then it's time to move into Career Mode, which throws missions at you chronologically, from the beginning to the end of the war. There's a bevy of brilliant external aeroplane views (as you'd expect from MicroProse), and the flight models are fine. The main problem with the game, though, is that (a) the enemy aircraft are too easy to shoot down (they only require one hit), and (b) you find yourself being constantly attacked no matter where you are, even over allied territory. These two faults combine, long term, to inject both a feeling of repetitiveness and a lack of tension.

Red Baron (Dynamix)

What can I say about *Red Baron* other than the game structure is very much along the same lines as *Knights Of The Sky*? There's the similar quickstart missions stuff, the ongoing war career (you can be Tommy or Hun) and an equal amount of aircraft available. Where *Red Baron* does differ from *Knights Of The Sky*, however, is that there are no one-hit kills. Realism-wise *Red Baron* also scores over *Knights Of The Sky* by the fact that you aren't continually attacked by a new enemy plane every 13 pico-seconds. Another thing worth mentioning is that *Red Baron* has an extensive VCR facility, and provided that you've got enough space on your hard drive you can save entire missions and view them at your leisure from any angle and distance you desire. On the down side, the atmosphere's not quite as good as that in *Knights Of The Sky*, and there's no shadow under your plane (which may not worry you particularly, but it pisses me off no end).



WORLD WAR TWO

Aces Of The Pacific (Dynamix)

This is the sequel to *Red Baron* and so, unsurprisingly, has a similar game structure; i.e. three zillion quickstart missions in any one of the many available aircraft, and a full ongoing war career. The graphics are superb throughout – both the interior

bitmapped cockpit stuff and the exterior polygon stuff – and the sound is pretty smart too, with neat touches such as the engine notes of other aircraft increasing in volume as they approach. So what of the actual air-to-air combat? Well, again it's good news because we're talking frantic when it happens, but with spaces in-between where you can get your breath back (and make a cup of tea). There are bombing raids and torpedo runs too (with incoming flak and AA). So all in all it's a mega thumbs up for *Aces Of The Pacific*, but for one fact: the flight models are too over simplified. Dynamix obviously decided to make the *Aces Of The Pacific* experience accessible to all – but for my money that sense of 'Blimey, this must have been what it was really like' is missing. Still, it's fun for a bit.

Their Finest Hour (LucasArts)

Yonks old, this one, but still great fun and heavy on atmosphere. Coded by the team who recently brought us the glorious *X-Wing*, we have the familiar flight sim blend of quickstart missions (British and German planes, fighters and bombers, you choose a side), and the full blown *Battle Of Britain* war career. The twist in *Their Finest Hour*, graphically speaking, is that there's a mixture of vector graphics and bitmaps – not so strange these days, but something of a first way back when it originally came out. Essentially all the ground detail is vector based, while the planes are sprites. Not texture mapped polygons, but sprites – pure and simple sprites. 'How can that work?' you may be wondering if you've never seen the game

running. 'Surely the artists can't have manually drawn every single aeroplane in the game from every possible angle known to man?' And you'd be right, but it works fine – a bit glitchy here and there admittedly, but you don't care because the atmosphere's so good. The game would now make a well worthy budget buy.

Secret Weapons Of The Luftwaffe (LucasArts)

For this game read exactly the same as for *Their Finest Hour*, but insert American aircraft for the allies' (B-17s, Mustangs etc.) and replace the Hun's aerial hardware with experimental mid '40s stuff such as jet powered ME 262s, ME 163s and others. A lot of people (mainly Yanks) rate this game higher than its prequel, but personally I prefer *Their Finest Hour*; mainly because it's got more of that old John Mills/Dicky Attenborough Sunday afternoon movie atmosphere.

(Top left) All guns blazing (well, one anyway) as you prepare to take out an enemy balloon in *Red Baron*. (Top middle) Same company, different war. The rather fab *Aces Over The Pacific* from Dynamix. (Top right) Numerous bitmaps at 12 o'clock! It's SWOTL from LucasArts. (Middle left) Back to WW1, but this time with MicroProse in their 'kite' simulator *Knights Of The Sky*. (Middle right) More bitmaps from LucasArts' *Their Finest Hour*.

External View



(Top left) A bit jerky when it moves, but B-17 from MicroProse carries bags of atmosphere.

(Top middle) Speedy graphics and arcade action combine to make F117A something of a corker.

(Top right) Digital Integration's Tornado is a worthy modern classic, but it does have a skeleton in its cupboard.

(Centre) The definitive modern air combat sim... Falcon 3.0.

B-17 (MicroProse)

A good game that narrowly missed becoming a true classic due to some silly oversights. Basically, you're in charge of a B-17 bomber and are responsible for take off, navigation to target, fighter suppression en-route, in-flight repairs to the aircraft, first aid to any injured crew, radio transmissions to your flight of computer controlled B-17 wingmen, target identification and verification, the bombing run itself, navigation back to Blighty (including more fighter suppression on the way) and, ultimately, landing. In other words there's a lot to do. There are ten crew members on board your plane, and you can become any one of them at any time by pressing the relevant function key. You can be the bombardier, the pilot or co-pilot, the radio operator or any one of the six gunners. And you can even move crew members about the plane, assigning them different jobs in emergency situations.

So what's the problem? Why is B-17 not a classic? Well firstly there's the annoying autopilot. Say you're the pilot and you decide to turn off engine one (because it's overheating) and then you press F5 to become the top turret gunner, the computer takes control of the flying and turns engine one back on again. Result? The engine explodes. Another problem is the fact the all the missions soon become a bit samey... you're always attacked by the same number of enemy aircraft, and they always give up after about the same amount of time. There are a few other niggly probs too, but I'll finish with this one: the landings are both unrealistic and unforgiving. I'd say this is a case of a game crying out for a sequel, but even as it stands I reckon you'll get about 15 hours worth of enjoyment from it before the annoyance factor gets to you.



drawn into dogfights but it's generally all BVR (Beyond Visual Range), which I suppose won't necessarily appeal to those who prefer 'seat of the pants' flying. That said, the atmosphere and depth of the game shine through, and the action is never less than frantic. F-117A may be old, it may be a trifle low on realism, but it's still a corker.

Tornado (Digital Integration)

Along the lines of F-117A, the aim in Tornado is to keep low. And if ever a game rewarded the pilot for keeping low it's this one, because the ground detail is outstanding. The mission planning stages in the game are, quite frankly, second to none, but to properly explain their complexity here would be an impossibility. Let me tell you instead that the RAF themselves have nicked large chunks of the system for their own real life

operations. Yes, a true fact; the RAF nick ideas from Digital Integration. You can't get a much higher accolade than that, can you? So what about the flight model? Well, that's as realistic as the mission planning stages are complex and the ground detail is outstanding. Like most games however, Tornado has a skeleton hiding in its cupboard. The problem is this: your wingmen don't get shot at when over their target - as you soon discover if you leave your own plane parked on the runway and instead

watch your computer controlled chums via their external views. No tracers fly up at them. No SAMs home in. No flak. What Digital Integration apparently did was to assign some sort of percentage chance to your wingmen being shot down - but this percentage chance, from my experience, just isn't realistic enough. So there you go. Tornado is the most realistic and challenging flight sim on the market, but it's got a flaw. Hopefully Digital Integration can somehow sort it out. (Oh, and while they're at it they'll also hopefully stick a shadow under the plane.)

Falcon 3.0 (MicroProse)

The king of them all, really, although Tornado (even with its skeleton in the cupboard) now seems to be settling nicely into the castle next door. Falcon 3.0 has a simple quickstart 'blast everything out of the sky' mode, a full training mode and, ultimately, the obligatory ongoing war scenario. The emphasis - unlike Tornado - is on air-to-air combat. Your Falcon is incredibly manoeuvrable, and the pilot has fantastic visibility, simulated in-game by the revolutionary (at the time - everyone's copying it now) padlock view. What the padlock view does is allow you to lock onto an enemy plane (or SAM) and then track it through 360 degrees (and overhead). The playing areas in Falcon 3 are huge. Absolutely

THE GULF, SOUTH AMERICA, AND BEYOND

F-117A Stealth Fighter (MicroProse)

This is a revamped version of MicroProse's earlier F-19 Stealth Fighter. And it's excellent, with either single missions or an ongoing war campaign to choose from (quelle surprise). The emphasis in this game is to attack the enemy without them ever spotting you. To do this you have to fly low and rely on the shape of your plane to confuse the enemy by giving you a low, and sometimes non-existent, radar signature. Of course, there are going to be times when you are spotted, and actually get



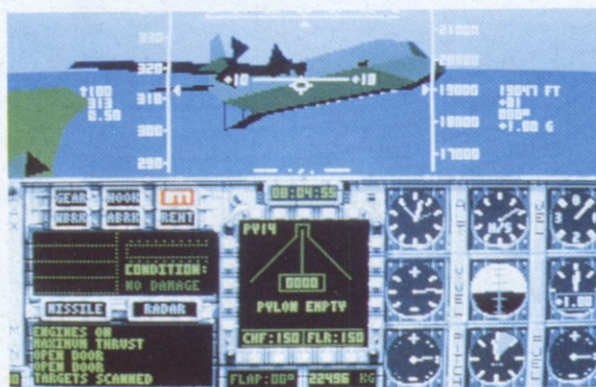


massive. The only real problem with the game – and this only comes after having played *Tornado* so much – is that the lack of ground detail is a wee bit of a piss off. Okay, fair enough, so you're generally hacking it out at 50,000 feet, but when you do finally go back down again – or do get sent on a bombing mission – you won't find much to please the eye (apart from the fact that the Falcon has a shadow). Still, it's a classic and no mistake. It also has more than its fair share of add-on disks for those who become completely obsessed.

MULTIPLANE EXTRAVAGANZAS

Birds Of Prey (Electronic Arts)

There are 40 aircraft stuffed into this offering, ranging from a Hercules transport aircraft all the way up to the North American X-15 experimental aircraft (which, believe it or not, has a service ceiling of 40 miles). You can take any of the planes out for a simple spin, or you can enter the (yes, you



guessed) ongoing war scenario. The flight models in the game are pretty hit and miss, with some aircraft responding as you'd expect while others just about fail to respond at all. The manual is totally unhelpful, the command keys are badly thought out and, worst of all, the polygon graphics are dire. It's amazing really, when you consider that some of the team who did this game went on to produce MicroProse's extremely fab ATAC (see *Helicopters*).

Dogfight (MicroProse)

The idea of the game: offer the player a free choice from planes of many eras. Then offer the player the chance to take that plane into a very simplistic but impossible to win 'campaign'. Finally, offer the player the chance to take his or her plane and pitch it in battle against any of the other aircraft available, regardless of their indigenous era. In other words you can fly a Spitfire against a Harrier, a Sopwith Camel against an ME 109 and so on. Nice idea, but there are a couple of problems: (a) *Chuck Yeager's Air Combat* already did it about three years ago, and (b) *Dogfight* has the longevity of an

electrically heated banana. Highlights include jerkovision™, three hit kills, wingmen who happily taxi through your stationary aircraft on runways (blowing you up in the process) and the inability to land on grass, even in a biplane at 40 mph. However, there are good things too: the cockpit interiors for instance, and the padlock view which is an improvement on Falcon 3.0's. There are other pros as well, but I won't harp on because at the end of the day they're outweighed by the cons to the tune of at least 300 to one.

Chuck Yeager's Air Combat (Electronic Arts)

I haven't used the word 'seminal' yet, so it's just as well I'm onto *Chuck Yeager's Air Combat*. It's seminal. There are six planes on offer, from three different war eras, and you can take any of these into a series of missions from their own time. Fly the Mustang or Focke Wulf in World War Two, the Sabre or Mig 15 in Korea, the Mig 21 or Phantom in Vietnam. Bored yet? Then how about some mixing and matching? You can have up to 15 computer controlled opponents in the air simultaneously and, with the large database of non-player-controlled aircraft available, you can set up scenarios like you in a Mustang versus five ME 163s, five ME 262s and five ME 109s. Or do the same thing but give yourself a Phantom to even the odds. The world's your oyster and, although the planes in *Chuck Yeager* fly in a slightly slow motion fashion, they handle nicely and 'make all the right noises', as it were. And there's a full VCR facility too. Oh and another brilliant point about *Chuck Yeager's Air Combat* is that, apart from now being out on budget, it happily runs smoothly on just about any crappy old machine. Basically, you can't do any better for 15 quid.

VTOL PLANES

AV8B Harrier Assault (Domark)

The team behind this, Simis, are really annoying. Why? Because they never put shadows under their planes, that's why. And lo and behold, the Harrier in this game hasn't got a shadow either but, apart from the external views being 'dynamic' rather than actually useful, it's the game's only fault. The flight model of the Harrier is outstanding, and the game is smart too. It's straight into an ongoing war scenario, with you in control of just about everything. The map planning sections are comprehensive and are along the same lines as those in *Tornado*. It's all very brain intensive stuff until the points where you leave the map screen and go out and blast things to smithereens. And like I said before, the Harrier flight model is fantastic: using the vectoring jets to full potential you can pull off some amazing tricks (which makes you sort of wish there was a VCR facility). Not really a game for the complete novice, though – I know some people who can't even take off.

Harrier Jump Jet (MicroProse)

Oh dear. Not MicroProse's finest moment, I'm afraid. The pictures on the back of the box look good and that's about it. This is a guru shaded, texture mapped extravaganza in which

(Top Left) A Pot Pourri of not very good things: it's *Dogfight* from MicroProse.

(Top middle) I first played this three years ago. I've just 'rediscovered' it. It's the seminal *Chuck Yeager's Air Combat* from Electronic Arts. (Top right) A top-notch flight model in a top-notch game: the rather hard Harrier AV8B from Domark. (Centre) CGA in VGA: i.e. Crap Graphics Ahoy, in 256 colours. It's *Birds Of Prey* from Electronic Arts.



(Top left) A static screen from the appalling Harrier Jump Jet.
(Top middle) For many, Gunship 2000 is the definitive chopper game.
(Top right) Superb graphics fight against bog standard gameplay in Novalogic's Comanche.
(Bottom left) Dated graphically, but a good budget buy: Electronic Arts' LHX Attack Chopper.
(Bottom right) If you want a good helicopter flight model, then ATAC from MicroProse delivers. It also delivers a crackingly good game.

the missions and flight model are shite. There are numerous hidden bugs waiting to pounce out at you, too. I managed to extract about an hours worth of fun by popping into chaseplane view and flying low level stunts through the twisting guru shaded canyons (luckily there's a shadow under the plane), but once that was over... well, it was back to DOS, onto the keyboard and time for the old DEL *.*. CD\ and RD HARRIER routine I'm afraid.

HELICOPTERS

Gunship 2000 (MicroProse)

I may come in for some flak when I say what I'm going to say about this game because for a lot of people it's the definitive helicopter sim. What I have to ask myself, however, is have these people ever flown a real helicopter? In Gunship 2000 there's no real sense of momentum. It's like all the nightmarish real-life helicopter responses have been blunted off to make it easy. And I'm not too sold on the graphics, either: the game world is pleasing to the eye and all that, but it somehow feels claustrophobic. It's kind of hard to explain. Where Gunship 2000 does come into its own though, is in its mission and campaign bits because there's heaps to learn, some serious tactics to adopt, lots of tense 'hiding behind things' moments, and plenty of blasty blasty parts! However, given the aforementioned handling characteristics of the helicopters, I could never really get into it. Maybe you will, but I couldn't.

Comanche (Novalogic)

The helicopter flight model in Comanche isn't going to impress anybody. However, I suppose I'm missing the point here, because Comanche isn't really about flying models; it's about graphics, and it's here that it most certainly scores. (as long as you've got a DX; preferably a fast 486 one). In all, Comanche is a showcase game cum mildly challenging shoot 'em-up which - if you're wealthy enough - is worth owning just so you can watch your friends' jaws drop when they see it. If you're not very wealthy though (and/or have a slow PC) then it's probably for the best if you keep your money in your wallet.

LHX Attack Chopper (Electronic Arts)

Written by the same geezer who did Chuck Yeager's Air Combat, this game, though dated, is still extremely playable. The flight models of the four choppers on offer (AH-64, UH-60, V-22 and

LHX) may not be alarmingly realistic, but they're certainly more than tolerable. The usual mission format is here - groundstrikes, rescues and so on - and there are three arenas of conflict (Libya, Vietnam and Germany). Some nice external views help to tart up a game that, at a budget price, will make a fine addition to anyone's collection.

ATAC (MicroProse)

This isn't strictly speaking just a chopper sim, but one of the two craft you get to fly does just so happen to be a helicopter. And more than that in fact, because it's a helicopter with an absolutely brilliant flight model. The main game (ongoing war in South America against evil drug barons) is excellent in itself, arcadey yet at the same time tactical, but I'm not going to talk about that. I'm just going to talk about the helicopter, which, like I said, is totally excellent. With a bit of practice you'll be pulling off all sorts of stunts - you know, the ones you see real chopper pilots doing at airshows: Sideslips? Yes. Rolling along the ground and taking off backwards? No probs. The 'loop'? Believe it or not, yes (although it's rather hard). In fact the only thing you can't do is auto-rotate, although it is

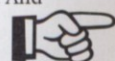


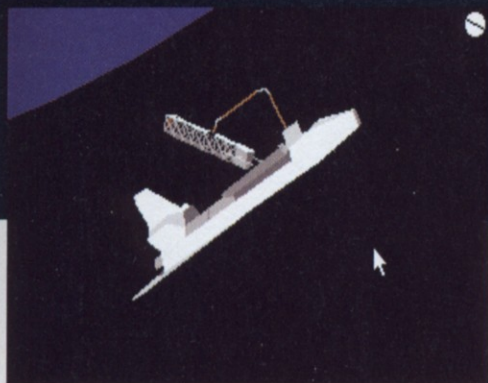
possible to simulate it if you make a very small leap of the imagination (and remember to turn your engines back on at the correct time). It's a shame there's no VCR with which to record your feats, but there are some really smart external views. Despite a few minor bugs, at the end of the day it has to be said that ATAC is something of a classic, whether you just want to fly the helicopter or even play the full-blown shooting match.

PLANES THAT GO VERY, VERY HIGH

Shuttle (Virgin)

I can't think of a plane that goes higher than the Space Shuttle, can you? And I can't think of a plane that has more dials and switches on its instrumentation panel either. And guess what? Every single dial and switch from the real Space Shuttle is recreated here; you'll need to learn





how to use them, too. Once you have learnt what they're all for (i.e. like about eight years after purchasing the game), you'll finally be able to take off. And then you can try your hand at some EVAS, or putting satellites in orbit and so on. Then re-entry time, followed by a deadstick landing, followed by next mission. It's way beyond me, is *Shuttle*, but I can appreciate it from afar. The exterior graphics are as good as they need to be and, well, er, actually I'm a bit scared, so I'll move on. Suffice as to say that if you want to know how to fly a Space Shuttle then look no further.

PLANES WITH NO GUNS

Flight Sim 5.0 (Microsoft)

Flight Sim 4.0 wasn't so much a game, but more of a tool. Using it you could learn to fly: you could learn to take off, to land, to navigate, to use your radio, to know when to turn on your 'carburettor heat' switch. And so on. With the numerous add-

on disks you could eventually have the entire planet earth mapped onto your hard drive and if you had a spare couple of days at your disposal you could fly from Sumatra to Timbuktu in a Cessna. Or a Learjet. Or you could try gliding there in a Sailplane. And *Flight Sim 5.0* is the same with one massive bonus: the original late '80s graphics have been overhauled and are now top-notch 1993 fare. Guru shading. Rotaty bitmaps. Texture mapping. To be quite honest, it looks completely stunning and flies pretty darned 'definitively' as well. There's no actual 'fun' to be had (because the design your own aircraft option has

been taken out), but then again *Flight Sim 5.0* isn't really about fun... it's about furrowed brows. An outstanding utility which may one day lead you to take the plunge and get your pilot's license for real.

STUNT PLANES AND CAMERAS

Stunt Island (Disney)

This is something of an oddity; it's also the sort of game I'd been waiting for all my life, so I was chuffed as a chaffer when someone actually wrote and produced it. Basically there are billions of planes on offer (and a pterodactyl). All can just be flown for fun or, using the brilliant interface, you can set up stunt situations to actually fly in them. There are several preset scenarios provided - a city (San Francisco), several towns, some airports, the Hoover dam and many others. Or you can create your own, using the extensive 3D polygon library. (And

when I say extensive, I mean it. It's massive.) Once you've chosen a set (or made your own) you can then place cameras about the place (up to six) and then it's time to do your fancy flying stuff. Cessna landing on moving train? Mig 29 flying through train tunnel? Boeing 747 trying to do barrel roll over Stonehenge? Whatever you like really. Once you've finished you can then go to the editing suite and actually make your own movie, using the different camera angles. And then you can dub on extra sounds from the extensive (again, I mean it) sound library. You can add credits, fade-ins, fade-outs and so on. The flight models vary between crap to realistic (the Pitts Special is particularly good, but I felt the Pterodactyl could have done with some tweaking), and the game is jam-packed with originality, and overflowing with potential. It all depends on you at the end of the day. With some imagination, it's possible that you'll enjoy *Stunt Island* in a way you've never enjoyed any computer game before: but you need a Sound Blaster for full effect.

KILLING REAL PEOPLE IN PLANES

Air Warrior (On-Line Entertainment)

Played over a modem, here's where the ultimate flying thrill lies. The graphics are basic but passable, the sound is actually quite good, and the excitement and atmosphere are awesome because you're up against other living people, in real-time, and everyone can type 'radio messages' to one another. Imagine one of those 0898 chatlines, but with the option to locate the person you're talking to and shoot them out of the sky (or conversely join forces with them and gang up on somebody else). I've never logged onto *Air Warrior* myself because I haven't got the necessary hardware, but I know a man who does and has, and he swears by it. ☑

THE FINALISTS

Most of the games mentioned in this feature are recommended in one way or another, but some are a large cut above the rest. Here's a selection I feel no self respecting armchair pilot's hard drive should be without... a mixture to suit any mood.

Tornado (but bear in mind the skeleton in its cupboard).

Falcon 3.0 (but bear in mind that Falcon 4.0 is in the offing).

Chuck Yeager's Air Combat (At 15 quid? Snap the bugger up pronto).

Flight Sim 5.0 (but bear in mind it's sort of 'boring').

ATAC (but you have to love helicopters).

Stunt Island (you can make films of all those things you've always wanted to try).

Harrier AV8B (but don't forget: it's a hard plane to fly).

(Top left) In space no-one can hear you scream when you realise there's no single 'return to earth' button. (Top middle) Fantastic graphics in the ultimate flight 'utility'. Yup, it's *Flight Sim 5.0* from Microsoft. (Top right) You're about to pluck an escaping convict from Alcatraz in Disney's *Stunt Island*. And then you can turn the manoeuvre into a film. (Bottom left) In *Air Warrior* the simple graphics are more than made up for by the fact that the enemy planes are being flown by real living people: real living people who own modems, that is.



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Blueprint

Star Trek: Judgement Rites

PUBLISHER: Interplay

PRICE: £39.99

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OUT: November

Can it really be done? Others tried and failed and only one previous attempt ever came close. Can **Paul Presley** really write a preview of Interplay's new *Star Trek* game and not include any Trek-related puns?

EIGHT NEW MISSIONS! Eight new missions filled with improbable '60s science fiction, over-used clichés, special guest stars from the TV series, pretentious speeches about the meaning of life and Trekkie in-jokes! I'm literally combing my hair with excitement because, you see, I have a confession to make. It's time I came out of the closet. I am... (gulp)... a Trekkie. In my defence I must say that I have never attended a *Star Trek* convention (although I have considered it from time to time but just to satisfy my curiosity, honestly) and I don't own any clothing/uniforms/costumes/props (apart from a communicator my brother bought me for Christmas as a joke). I do have all the episodes on tape though (*The Next Generation* and *Deep Space Nine* included) and recently bought the special wide-screen pack of the first five films, but on the whole I don't let it rule my life. It's purely a passive luxury, nothing more.

Passive, of course, until you come to the games. I have to say that when Interplay announced *Star Trek: 25th Anniversary* they took an awful risk. Think about it, if they had put one foot wrong, got one characterisation just a little bit off or did one thing that just wasn't 'Trek' enough, there would have been legions of fans demanding blood and denouncing the game as downright sacrilege. Luckily this wasn't the case. Interplay's first offering was regarded pretty much as the bee's knees and was hailed as true Trek, from the nature of the stories right down to the way Kirk sat in his chair.

The adventure continues...

Judgement Rites is Interplay's attempt to continue the success/further the tradition/rake in the cash of the first game. Eight new missions await Kirk and Co. this time with better graphics and a slightly more polished interface, but apart from these minor nuances not much appears to have changed. Although as the old saying goes: 'If it ain't broke, dinnae apply a Phase Invertor to it laddie'.

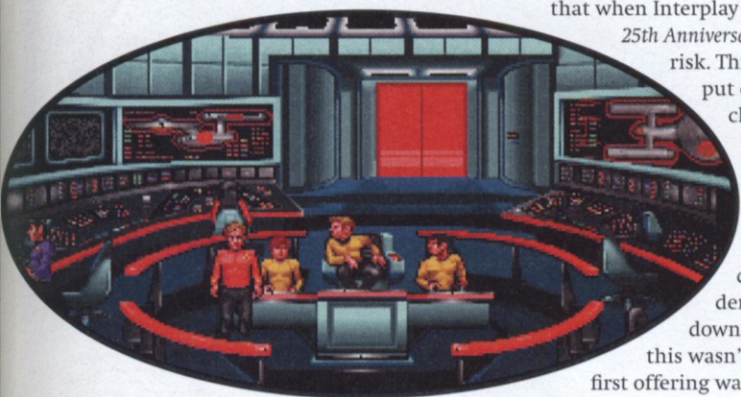
One of the areas that does appear to have been improved upon is the starship combat. It was generally felt by most Trek fans that the combat sections were the weakest link to the TV series, since going into battle was always a last resort for Kirk and having a fight before each adventure started in the game was just seen as pandering to the action junkies who sadly



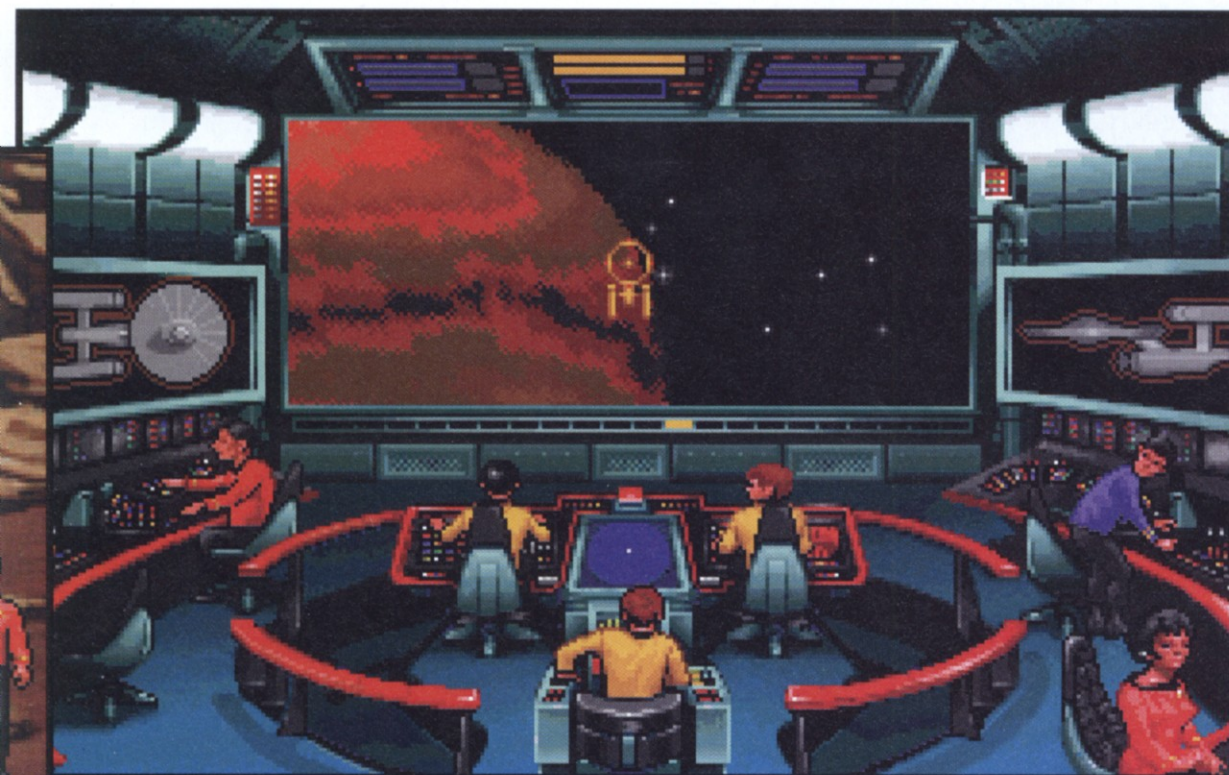
Spock tries unsuccessfully to re-align the satellite dish to pick up Sky TV in time to watch *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

Five things you really shouldn't know about *Star Trek*

1. In her recently published autobiography, Nichelle 'Uhuru' Nichols alleged that Gene Roddenberry had affairs with her and Majel 'Nurse' Chapel from the original series, and Lwaxanna Troi and 'Ship's Computer voice from *The Next Generation*' Barrett!
2. It is reported that William Shatner's ego was such that he would confer with the scriptwriters of each episode to make sure that if any smooching was to take place in the programme, he would be the one doing it!
3. *Star Trek* was often described as a space opera, and so to help celebrate Trek's 25th anniversary, Paramount teamed up with the New York City Opera to actually stage *Star Trek: The Opera*.
4. With *Star Trek VI* seeming to round off the original crew's movie adventures, *Star Trek VII* was at first going to portray Kirk's younger days in a humorous Starfleet Academy. It was only vehement lobbying by fans that prevented this '*Police Academy In Space*' from taking place.
5. Finally, with the seventh *Star Trek* film in production (the actual plot for which, according to the last reports, sees the original crew meeting *The Next Generation* team) you might like to know who is still around in the '90s version: Spock is still alive and hiding out on the Romulan home planet. McCoy is still alive but is now a doddering old man, over a hundred years of age! The reports on the film have it that Kirk gets cryogenically frozen and then thawed out in *The Next Generation*'s time. And perhaps most outlandishly of all is Scotty who, 75 years before Picard and Co. arrived, was trapped on a shipwrecked Federation vessel and found that the only way he could survive was to beam his matter patterns into the transporter pad's computer memory circuits (hey, I don't write this stuff)! He was then rescued in a *Next Generation* episode, no older than when we left him in the films. The rest of the crew have yet to be accounted for.



'You finally get to say: "Reverse-angle view Mr. Checkov" in that curious stop-start manner that Kirk has.'



The use of different-sized sprites has allowed Interplay to use different camera angles to help convey the atmosphere.

Kirk and the gang find themselves in war-torn France, 1917. Not so odd when you consider what usually happens to them week after week.

The good old Vulcan nerve pinch gets them every time.

make up the masses. This time round, however, starship combat seems to be much less intrusive, only appearing when vital to the plot.

It has been revamped slightly though, a sort of compensation for not appearing as often. Using Chekov during combat you can now lock on to a target making aiming much easier and you can call up any one of six views around the Enterprise for all-round coverage. You can finally get to say: 'Reverse-angle view Mr. Chekov' in that curious stop-start manner of talking that Kirk has.

The continuing missions

As for the plots, these are sticking pretty much true to form and in fact seem to better represent the heady mix of story styles seen in the TV series than the original game did. We have the discovery of a new race, the meeting of an old enemy, Kirk being transported to a planet that resembles Earth in an early stage of it's history, a good old-fashioned save the galaxy tale and an episode where we see more of the Enterprise.

In Voids (working title) the Enterprise gets badly beaten by an unknown force. Power is down all over the ship and the bridge is shut off from the rest of the ship. To make matters

worse, Spock appears to have been lost in a transporter accident. It's up to Kirk to gain access to the rest of the ship and save the day. Best of all, the rest of the main crew get to accompany Kirk on some of the adventures, allowing the writers to delve into the characterisation of our real favourites from the show.

Interplay have wisely stuck to a tried and tested formula for *Judgement Rites* and the initial impression is that it has paid off. The quality of scripts is the real selling point this time round, we'll just have to wait and see whether they can include an impressive adventure element.

PCZONE specs

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Minimum Processor: 386SX

Minimum Speed: 16MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: TBD

Minimum Graphics: EGA

Soundcards: All major soundcards

Controls: Keyboard, Mouse

Comments: Dual soundcard support

'The rest of the main crew get to accompany Kirk on some of the adventures, allowing the writers to delve into the characterisation of our favourites from the show.'

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Blueprint

Rise Of The Robots

PUBLISHER: Mirage

PRICE: tba

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OUT: January

It was one of the sensations of the European Computer Trade Shows. Now *Rise Of The Robots* has to impress a tired Paul Lakin after a long train journey to Stoke-on-Trent.

THERE WERE TWO reasons I was so keen to spend a day in Stoke-on-Trent. One was that, despite never having been anywhere near the place, Stoke City were my childhood football team (something to do with Gordon Banks I think). The second reason was the short demo I'd already seen of *Rise Of The Robots*. The game was looking more than a little special. When it was displayed at a recent trade show some distributors refused to believe it was running on a PC, and insisted they were watching a video. So I arrived in Stoke full of anticipation and British Rail coffee. Unfortunately things didn't get off to the best of starts.

What's in a name

'What an innovative marketing idea.' I said. 'You've got a guaranteed take up from all the Bobs out there.'

'I'm sorry?'

'*Rise Of The Robots*. It's brilliant. A beat 'em-up about Roberts taking over the factory. It's a marketing department's dream. Everyone called Robert, Bob, Bobby they'll all want a piece of the action. Perhaps you could get it endorsed by Robert DeNiro.'

'It's *Rise Of The Robots*. It's robots that take over the factory.'

'Oh I see, and these robots are

all called Robert?'

'No. They don't have a name.'

They're just different types of robot: builders, soldiers etc.'

'And the hero is?'

'The hero is a Cyborg sent to regain control of the factory.'

'And he's called Robert.'

'No.'

'Then who is called Robert?'

'No one. Please listen very carefully. There are no Roberts in this game. Just robots - specifically droids and cyborgs.'


'Then why in the name of Norman Wisdom is it called *Rise Of The Robots*?'

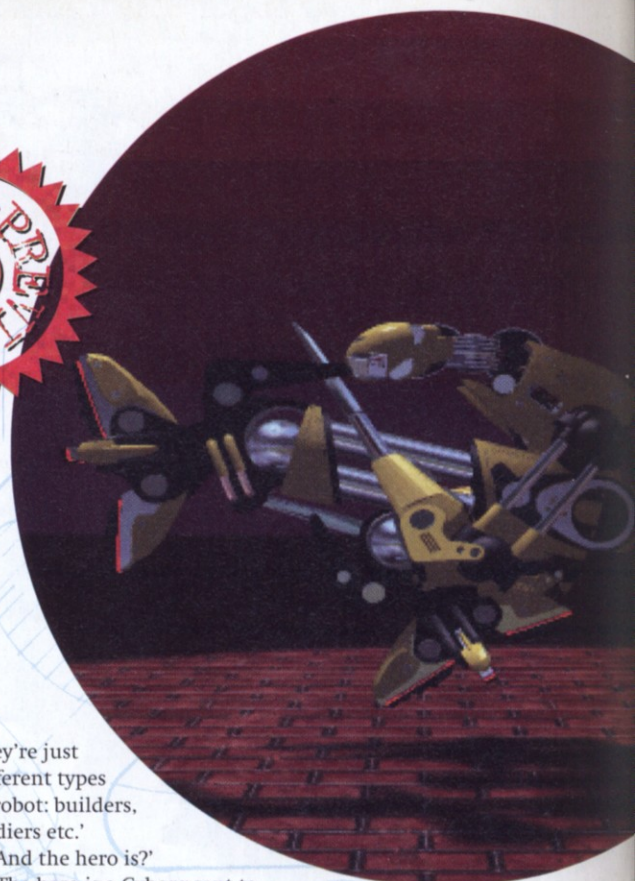
The Id(ea)

So what's the idea behind *Rise Of The Robots*? What does it aim to achieve? Sean Griffith, game designer and big cheese on the Instinct Design development team, takes up the story. 'I had the original idea for *Rise Of The Robots* before

Streetfighter II hit the arcades.' Sean had been responsible for *Barbarian*, a classic beat 'em-up of about four years ago, which he feels 'had never really been bettered.' Until now of course.

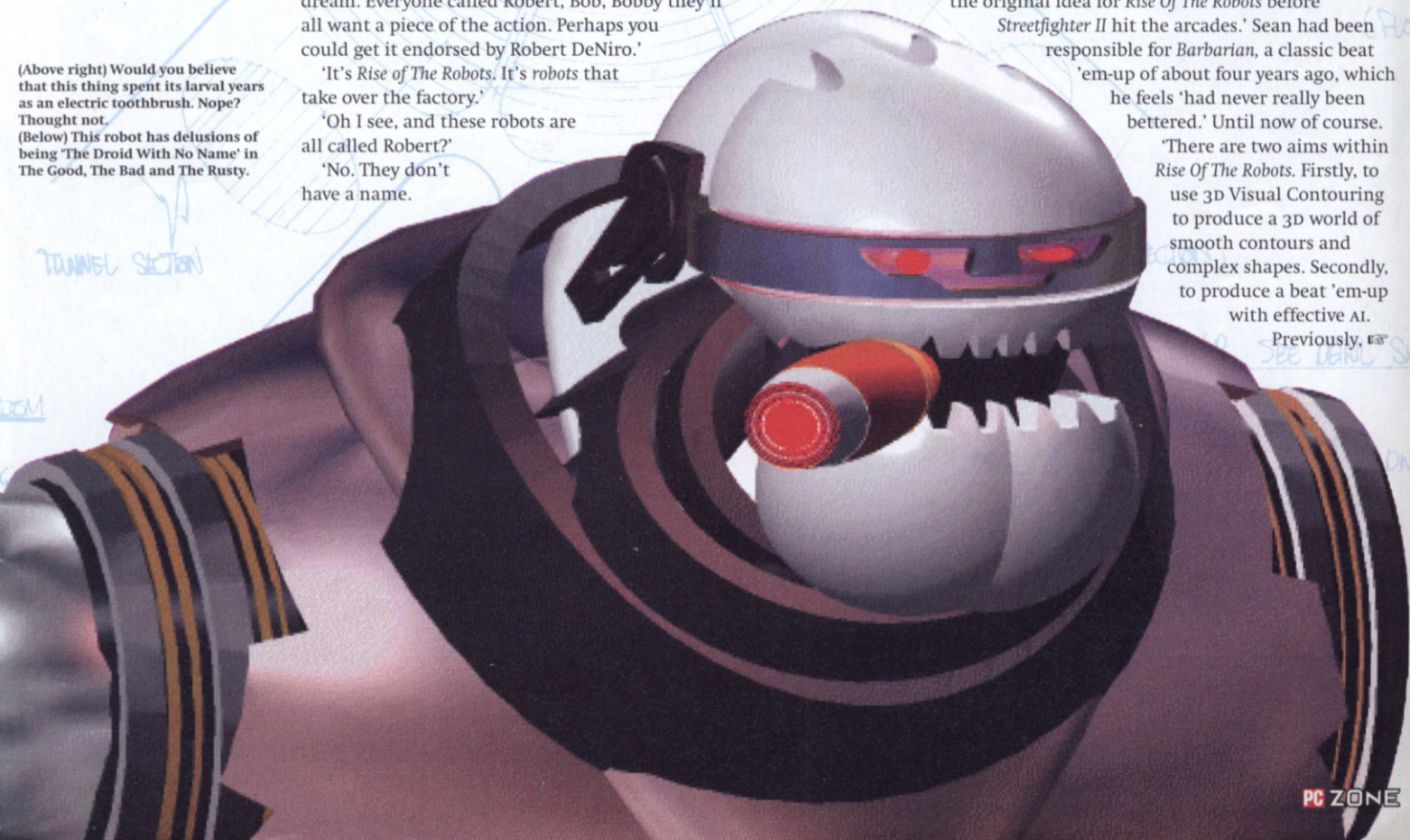
'There are two aims within *Rise Of The Robots*. Firstly, to use 3D Visual Contouring to produce a 3D world of smooth contours and complex shapes. Secondly, to produce a beat 'em-up with effective AI.'

Previously, 



(Above right) Would you believe that this thing spent its larval years as an electric toothbrush. Nope? Thought not.

(Below) This robot has delusions of being 'The Droid With No Name' in *The Good, The Bad and The Rusty*.



Imagine sitting having toast and marmite in your kitchen and this thing crawls out from under the fridge. Come back 'roaches all is forgiven.

THE ROBERTS

Each of the robots you come up against has a specific task within the factory. Both their look and their fighting pattern has been influenced by this task. As you can see by comparing the early sketches with the final screenshots there have been numerous changes in the design. In fact Instinct freely admits that the it was quite a wrench to stop tinkering around with the design of the robots and get on with the game itself.

ARTIFISHAL INTELLIGENCE

According to Instinct Design one of the key weaknesses behind even some of the best beat 'em-ups is the weakness of the AI. Not so with *Rise Of The Robots*, they claimed pointing me in the direction of a screen crammed with matrices. Matrices that I was not worthy to even begin to understand.

Essentially each robot's decision making is influenced by four factors: Strength, Intelligence, Speed and Motivation. The level of intelligence will decide to what extent the robot selects the best manoeuvre for the current situation while Motivation will decide if the robot selects an attacking or defensive move. (There's a separate matrix for each.)

Instinct believe that the AI should not only be effective but visible. The player must feel it's working. So, for example, some robots, if they're doing badly will start to fight increasingly ineffectively, while if they're doing well they'll pile in for the kill. Others will be the opposite.

PCZONE specs

Minimum Memory: 2Mb/4Mb

Minimum Processor: 386/486

Minimum Speed: 16MHz/25MHz

Installation: Essential

Minimum Hard Disk: 5-10Mb/40Mb
(less for the CD version)

Minimum Graphics: VGA

Soundcards: All major soundcards

Controls: Joystick, Keyboard

Comments: There will be a separate SVGA and VGA version of the game. The higher specs are for the SVGA version.



PETER CHANDLER

INSTINCT DESIGN

Mirages new in-house development team go under the name of Instinct Design and are headed up by **Sean Griffiths**, a former member of **The Bitmap Brothers** and the brains behind such legends as *Barbarian*, *Magic Pockets* etc. etc. Unusually, two of the other designers come from outside the games industry. The stunning interiors in the game are designed by Kwan Lee who was, suitably enough, an interior designer. Sean Nadin, who is described as a 3D Modeller was discovered via an advert in the local job centre and had not previously worked in computer-based art, though that's hard to believe when you see some of the robots. The idea is that the mixture of people fresh to the industry with those firmly based inside it brings new ideas and an open-minded approach. It seems to work.



The Loader Droid: By far the most mechanical of the droids, the Loader was originally designed to have caterpillar tracks. Although this idea was ditched, the droid still shows its fork-lift truck ancestry. Something of a blunt instrument, but a very powerful one.



Builder Droid: Ape shaped in design, the Builder is one step up the evolutionary ladder from the Loader. (It has, for example, learned to smoke cigars.) What it lacks in brains it makes up for in brawn.



Crusher Droid: More insectoid than humanoid, the crusher's long hydraulic legs give it a deceptively awkward walking motion. Not one for arachnophobes.



Soldier Droid: A very nasty piece of work, the soldier droid has a skeletal design and is designed to be nothing more nor less than a killing machine.

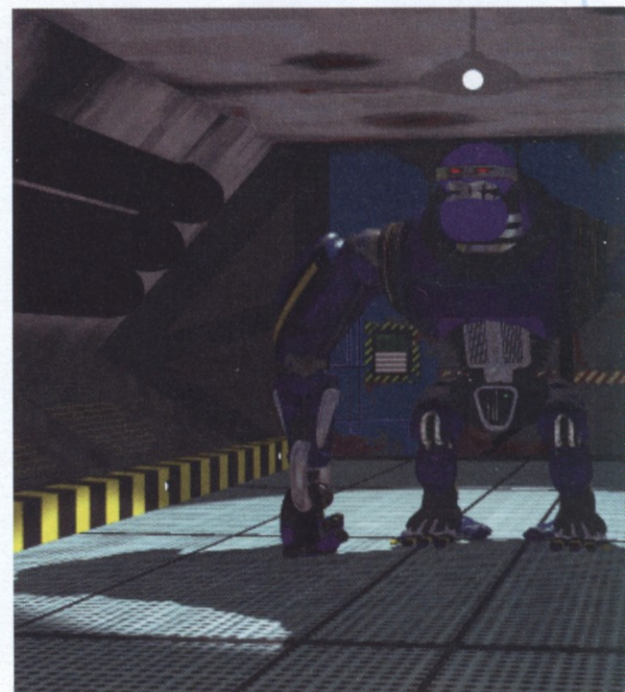


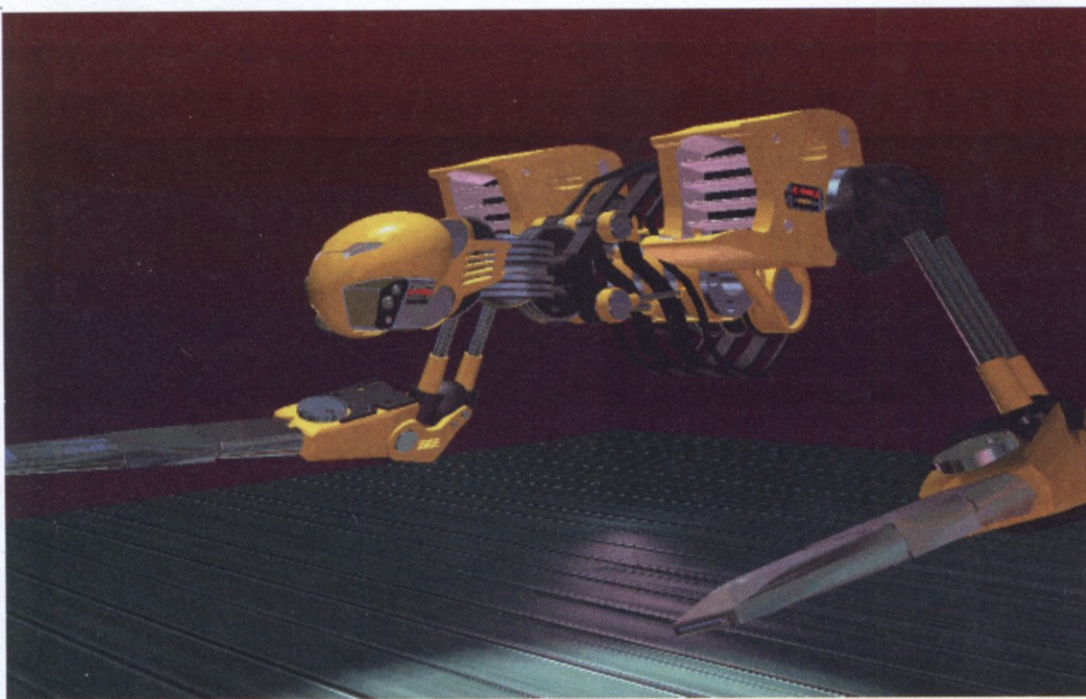
Fighter Droid: The nearest that *Rise Of The Robots* gets to the ninja heroes of other beat 'em-ups, the Fighter is designed specifically for unarmed combat.

The design on this droid is particularly stunning with a strong Japanese influence in both styling, texture and colour.



Supervisor Droid: If you've seen *Terminator 2* you'll be familiar with the hazards of fighting against a morphable robot capable of moulding itself into any form and even melting to avoid a punch. The Supervisor is the droid who has seized control of the factory and he's your ultimate opponent.





(Above) The design of the robots is quite stunning.
(Below right) Beats the hell out of Metal Mickey any day.
(Below) Dianne Fossey eat your heart out

always wanted for Christmas.' I cried. 'The one with the two robots in a boxing ring and when you knocked one of them out his head zapped up on a stick. Smart!'

I don't know if you've ever been in close proximity to a programming team whose prized product you have just compared to a mid '70s kids' toy but it's not something I would recommend doing too often.

In one player mode you fight a series of head to head bouts against progressively tougher robots, each in his own (and beautifully rendered) environment. After you've defeated one robot (in a best of three, five or seven bouts depending on the difficulty level) you pass, via a rather impressive link sequence, into the next location and the next robot until ultimately you end up face to face with the Supervisor;

a character not totally uninfluenced by the T1000 in the film *Terminator 2*.

Robert Robinson

It's a shame, really, that *Rise Of The Robots* isn't looking like a really hopeless game. If it was I could have headed this paragraph 'Robot A Flack' or something equally clever. Oh well, that's journalism for you. In fact *Rise Of The Robots* is looking truly excellent. The backgrounds, each of which has been designed properly by an interior designer, have an absolute wealth of detail and atmosphere. The robots themselves are also a joy to behold and what I saw of the animations promises great things. If these boys fight as well as they look they could set new standards for beat 'em-ups

which is good news for Roberts everywhere. **Z**

'The aim is to keep the player immersed in the game as much as possible.'

simple algorithms have been used to control computer fighters. This has led to the player following a pattern to defeat his opponent, which should not happen.

'So *Rise Of The Robots* should have revolutionary 3D graphics, powerful AI and, of course, instant playability.'

The Ego

Although essentially *Rise Of The Robots* is a head to head beat 'em-up there is an overall scenario to the game, a reason to the madness. Action takes place in the future - a future in which Electrocorp are the biggest manufacturer of military and industrial robotics. In the spirit of industrialists the world over they are keen to reduce the number of employees on the shop floor. To this end they develop The Supervisor, a state of the art android capable of running the whole operation. So out go the humans and in comes the Supervisor.

However, before you can say: 'Reduced overheads', the Supervisor, infected by the Ego virus, siezes control of the factory, sets up a security blockade and attempts to introduce the other robots to the principle of revolutionary communism. Today the factory; tomorrow the world, ha ha ha.

In order to regain control of the factory Electrocorp send in a cyborg with a human brain as its CPU (so it couldn't be infected by the virus). Obviously, being money mad, property obsessed capitalists, Electrocorp don't want the factory damaged so the cyborg must go in unarmed. (See that weaponless cyborg walking into that factory full of killer robots? That's you that is.)

As with most games the plot will be set up by an introduction sequence plus a number of inter-level sequences. The aim is to keep the player immersed in the game as much as possible. 'In conventional games the player is constantly broken away from the game's "world" by having to view high score tables, credits and various interfaces' Not so with *Rise Of The Robots*. 'All external game input will be done through graphical sequences relating to the plot'. A good example of this is in the selection of one or two player mode. This is done by moving your cyborg down the relevant tunnel. It's little touches like these...

Jung guns go for it

At the heart of *Rise Of The Robots* is a classic arcade style combat game, except with robots instead of ninja, sumo wrestlers or leather boys. 'So it's like a computer version of that game I



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If you seem to be spending an uncanny amount of time cowering in the corner, staring in horror at your PC as it quotes passages of DOS at you, then perhaps it's time to write to Mark Burgess, our very own disk doctor.

Listing Pages

I AM WRITING to ask whether you can advise me if there is a directory or listing available so I can get the addresses of the games manufacturers. The reason for this is that I'm deaf, so if I need help or technical advice I am stuck as you only list the telephone numbers. As I have only a quarter of a normal person's hearing I am sure you will appreciate my problem.

Bob Bray, Skelmersdale, Lancs

ps. I am new to computers. Is there a flight sim available of Concorde?

There isn't an equivalent of the *Writer's Yearbook* which lists all software publishers and is for sale to the general public. There would be no market for it because if you buy a game you find the publisher's address amongst the documentation. And if you want to know about a forthcoming product, advertisements for it will also carry the publisher's address. I'm sending you a list of addresses that I find useful.

There may be an add-on disk for MS Flight Simulator 4 which has Concorde - I've seen shareware aircraft ranging from the Wright Brothers' Flyer to the latest stealth aircraft. There is no single program that I know of that lets you fly Concorde. MB.

Overkill

I AM SINCERELY hoping that you can help me out with a couple of problems I have been having. I recently bought *Comanche Maximum Overkill* and it has been driving me mad. The problem is this: it loads fine and I can sit and watch it play the demo missions but as soon as I touch the keyboard BANG! (no, not a booby trap) it dumps me back into DOS with the following message: '00000000/02:NMI' surrounded by a red bar. Don't get me wrong; it does not always crash, sometimes I can play a mission or three then it will crash on the after mission screen giving the same error message as above. I have tried every memory configuration known to man (well, to me anyway). I have about 680K of conventional memory and 4Mb of XMS. I have also tried the boot disk program supplied and all the sound options with no success. (By the way, I have just ordered a Sound Galaxy NX Pro Extra from

Silica Systems. What do you think of the board?) This is my set up: PAT38PX 386DX-40 motherboard with 5Mb of memory, a 1Mb Trident graphics card, Interquad SVGA monitor, Cherry enhanced keyboard, Mach 1 joystick, Microsoft compatible mouse and, hopefully by the time you read this, a Sound Galaxy NX Pro Extra.

My other problem is just as irritating but a bit embarrassing. It's to do with my BIOS setup program. You know the way they have a password system to stop unauthorised changes being made? Well a few months ago I typed in a password (hold the laughter) and guess what? I have forgotten it and cannot get back into the setup program. As the company that I bought my PC from did not see fit to give me a BIOS manual with my computer, I have no way of knowing if there is some sort of override to get past the password and then remove it from the BIOS EEPROM. It's an American Megatrends BIOS and any help would be gratefully received.

Yours forever a PC Zone fan.

Simon Thompson, Bangor, N Ireland

A Speccy Writes

not only own a PC but also a Spectrum +2A. Lately my usual magazine (*Your Sinclair*) had its last edition which is very sad because I think it's the last speccy mag.

In the last two editions it had a section on emulators. From what I can make out an emulator is either hardware or software which enables you to use other makes of computers' software or language on your PC.

What I suggest is a kind of six month column on emulators for the PC. Each month you could do a different computer. Maybe there are emulators for the old computers such as Dragons, MSXS and even the BBC. I'm sure people still own software for these computers. Then they can chuck away the computers and own a PC. I know I would love to own an Atari STE without having to buy one.

Jamie King, Bath

PS. I've kept writing this question to magazines but with no response: how do you upgrade from a 286 to a 486.

There is a Spectrum emulator available as shareware, and some shareware CP/M emulators. The trouble with any such program is that to work it needs the machine's code somewhere. And a machine's code is jealously guarded by all sorts of copyright protection. There are plenty of programs that allow a PC to read Atari, Macintosh and Amiga disks, but that's as far as they go.

The trouble with upgrading from a 286 to a 486 is that the 286 is a 16-bit chip whereas the 486 is 32/64-bit chip. That means that you will need to buy a new motherboard - you can't just put in a new chip. A 486DX/33MHz should cost about £250 - £300. MB.

There were problems with early versions of *Comanche* and some graphics boards, particularly video accelerators. Send your disks back to US Gold (Units 2 & 3, Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX, England) and they will send you the latest version. We've got the Sound Galaxy card here - it's brilliant.

As for your other problem, I've looked through a number of systems and have always been depressed at the predictability of passwords. The most popular are God, Sex, Boss and Fred (look at the keyboard for an explanation of the last). Otherwise people's passwords are tied to their interest or hobbies. Try your favourite stars, your birthday, your girlfriend's name. Or SYSOPS or TEST or DEMO. The reason you should try is because otherwise the solution is a little drastic: you are going to have to power down the BIOS.

Before you do this make a note of all the settings - and I mean all - memory refresh rates, the lot. Then take out the BIOS battery from the motherboard for about 12 hours. If it's soldered in there will be a jumper to discharge it (I hope you at least have a manual for the motherboard). Switch the jumper for about five minutes and for God's sake make sure you have the right one. The BIOS will then be wiped to default values so all you have to do now is re-type your values. Now, where did you put that piece of paper? MB.

Board Agenda

I ENJOYED your article on modems in the October issue. However, my modem has a different set of lights from those you describe. They go HS, AA, CD, OH, RD, SD, TR, MR, RS, CS, and SYN. I know that CD, RD and MR are the same but what do the others mean? My modem is a Courier, if that's any help.

Graham Trent, Washington, Tyne & Wear

Okay, get ready:

HS	High Speed (above 2,400 bps)
AA	Auto Answer
OH	Off Hook (disconnected)
SD	Send Data - same as Transmit Data
TR	[Data] Terminal Ready - same as DTR
RS	Request to Send
CS	Clear to Send - same as CTS
SYN	synchronous/when the modem is set to synchronous mode MB.

Turbo Switch

I RECENTLY replaced my much used 32K BBC with a 386SX 33 with 2Mb RAM and 44Mb hard disk. This is my introduction to PCs and all my measly students' grant would stretch to. I have a couple of questions I hope you can help me with.

First, I have a Quickshot II Turbo joystick which I connected to the BBC with an adapter. I have been unable to find pin connection diagrams for the ports on my PC in order to make a new adapter. Can these joysticks be used on a PC?

Secondly, I am considering buying a Sound Blaster v 2 with speakers, *Lemmings* and *Indy 500* for about £90.00 all in. I would appreciate your opinion of this card or a suitable alternative for domestic use. I see from adverts for the Sound Blaster that it has a joystick port. Will the Quickshot fit this?

Compressed X-Wing

I bought a 386SX 33 last year with Windows 3.1 and DOS 6. I have recently bought X-Wing which cost me another £40.00. I installed it and, guess what, it worked. A few weeks later, however, the game went all funny. For instance, now, when you fly a mission and you press ESC to get an option screen, where normally it said 'SOUND OFF.' etc. it churns out stuff like 'XEM6AB,7' and so on. So I 'phoned Lucas Arts Hotline and they said X-Wing doesn't support DOS 6 and if I wanted X-Wing to work I should de-compress my D:\ drive but I don't know how to do it. Could you clearly explain to me what to do?

Pierre Sampere, Altringham, Cheshire

PS. Oh and by the way, this letter is very important to Altringham because ten of my friends get the same problems and Micro Fun, Boots and W. H. Smith can't solve them. Your mag is great, I love it and thank you for answering my question.

X-Wing does work with doublespace - I think your problem is something else such as soundcard incompatibility (early versions wouldn't work with Sound Blaster) or a non-Microsoft mouse driver. There's a patch available from US Gold, Units 2 & 3 Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham, B6 7AX. The pukka Microsoft driver will be in your DOS directory and be called MOUSE.COM. Try these two things before tackling doublespace. Also check that you're not getting an 'out of XMS' message', in which case use MemMaker to free up more Extended Memory.

Although doublespace talks about compressed drives, it really means a massive file called a Compressed Volume File (CVF). This is a read-only, hidden system file on the uncompressed drive. If you're sure the fault is with doublespace then I hope you have enough space on your uncompressed drive to re-install X-Wing, otherwise you are going to have to re-size the compressed/uncompressed drives. On the doublespace menu choose 'Change Size' and press F1. The help file should guide you painlessly through the procedure. For an overview, type HELP DBLSPACE at the command prompt. MB.

In Edinburgh we say one as wan and two as t-hoo. Thanks again for the best mag on the market!

Nathan Gunn, Edinburgh

The Genius B105W is about £120 and comes with iPhoto Deluxe and GO-CR, the Logitech ScanMan 256 is about £180 and comes with Foto Touch. Both scanners will produce images in a format that can be read by Neopaint and Envision Publisher, but neither of these packages will control a scanner from within the program. MB.

Games Kit

I INTEND to buy a PC in four weeks time, but I need a lot of help to know what PC to buy and what specification to go for. I am a complete novice to the world of PCs although I have been reading magazines for the last three months which has given me a bit more knowledge. Could you please give me some advice on the requirements I will need for my intended use.

I will use it for word processing, with programs such as WordPerfect 5.1, but mainly I want to play games/simulations, such as Alone In The Dark, X-Wing, Comanche, Falcon 3 and Indy Car. I want these to look, sound and run they best they can and I intend to buy a Sound Galaxy NX Pro card.

Could you please give me some advice on things like what processor I will need, what monitor, what graphics card, what size hard drive and how much RAM. The computers I am looking at include DAN, MITAC, PC DEALS, and VALE (486DX 50/66).

I am a complete novice, please help me.

A Perry, Chelmsley Wood, Birmingham

The games you mention (particularly Indy Car) need a high spec PC. You certainly need a 486DX to get them running at their best and your own choice of a 50/66 MHz is close to ideal. You need a hard disk of at least 100Mb and 4Mb of memory. That means you are looking at the Dan Vantage range or equivalent. MB.

Neck In PCs

1. WHILE READING an advert in a newspaper for a PC distributor I noticed something written in the 'small print'. It read 'MS DOS and Windows 3.1 are normally preloaded by manufacturer, disks are not supplied'. Although the boxes and instructions are supplied isn't it illegal not to supply the disks? If it is illegal, who do I contact for a nice juicy reward?

2. I have just upgraded from a 286 25MHz with CGA to a 486 33MHz with SVGA. I would still use the old computer as well but I need a VGA monitor and card, and due to the upgrade I can only afford a mono VGA. Are mono VGA monitors compatible with all colour VGA and EGA software?

3. I bought a 3.5" 1.44Mb drive for the eight year old AT running MS DOS. When I try to format any disks I can only format them to 360kb of 1.2Mb. How do I tell my computer that I have a 3.5" in drive B and a 5.25" (which is fine) in drive A? When I try a disk formatted on a different computer I get error messages such as 'SECTOR NOT FOUND'. And my formatted disks don't always work on other PCs.

Oh yeah, one more thing: could you also do a review on some of the more popular soundcards?

From a loyal and dedicated reader (who wouldn't say no to a present as he has just broken a bone in his neck and has to wear a collar for three months).

Chris Zaremba, Bedford

1. This is getting very common. In fact, you're lucky that the manuals are being supplied. Several manufacturers just ship with pre-loaded software without documentation or disks. Tough if the program isn't self-explanatory or if your copy gets corrupted. It isn't illegal because the suppliers have struck up a deal with Microsoft or whatever, and they are telling you what you get. Whenever you see PCs advertised as having pre-loaded software, ask to make sure whether the master disks and documentation comes with it. So no reward, I'm afraid.

2. If the card supports all VGA modes and it's a graphics monitor then maybe. VGA has 15 modes. Mode 67 is mono text (MDA) and mode 6F is mono graphics (EGA mono). If you really want to know, modes 60 - 66 are CGA, EGA takes in those plus 6D, 6E, 6F and 610 and modes 611, 612 and 613 are new 'VGA'. But I'm not sure whether games would be playable. You'd be better off using the 285 for word processing and so on.

3. The fault is in the version of DOS. Upgrade to at least v 5. Your version thinks you have an XT and so formats to 360K. Once you have the new version of DOS, run SETUP (press DEL on boot up) and alter the drive parameters so that the computer knows you have a 1.44Mb.

We did a feature on soundcards for the first PC Zone and will do another in the next issue. MB.

Finally, my stereo has inputs for CD, video, turntable etc. on the back; a left and a right jack socket for each. Are any outputs from the Sound Blaster suitable as I would love to hear some of my games on four speaker surround sound? Hope you can help.

Aaron Anderson, Belfast

The standard joystick has a 9-pin female connector but the PC version has a 15-pin male connector. There are adapters to let you use 9-pin joysticks on PCs.

The Sound Blaster is an excellent card and widely supported. It is also fully Ad-Lib compatible. There is a speaker out socket that will connect with your stereo via the AUX socket on your amplifier. You need a cable with a 3.5mm jack terminated in two jacks; Sound Blaster 2 isn't a stereo card. MB.

Collecting Keyboards

AT THE MOMENT I have an IBM 286 which has given me great pleasure throughout the months. But on visiting my father, he introduced me to his 486 with some extras in it. Now I want to buy a 486. However, one thing puzzles me. On looking round the various shops they all told me the same thing: you cannot buy the hard drive on its own, you've got to sell all you have and then buy the whole system. Please can you help? What I have so far is a VGA monitor, an IBM keyboard and an IBM AT. All I want to do is to sell the 286 and buy a 486 - there must be an easier way surely. So far your magazine has helped me get the games I really wanted so I hope you can help.

M Thomas, Catterick Garrison, N Yorks

By 'hard drive' I guess you mean the systems unit; that is, the cream box that holds the drives, motherboard etc. You can, with a bit of haggling, get a shop to sell you the computer without a monitor but I've never heard of a shop that sells them without keyboards. The keyboard doesn't add much to the total anyway. You might be able to sell the spare keyboard through a small ad, otherwise keep it in case your other one breaks. MB.

Deja Vu

IN YOUR LAST issue there was a letter from Dave Stewart about drilling holes in your PC. I was browsing in Smith's and lo and behold, there in A N Other magazine was the same letter. Who got it from whom?

Sara Talbot, Frensham, Surrey

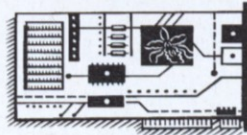
Some people write the same letter to different magazines. Because the letters pages are the first to be written (this is being written on 20 September) it's difficult to stop these duplicates. There was nearly a letter here from Kevin Kerring of Basingstoke but, just in time, I saw it somewhere else, I forget where. The trouble with sending duplicates is that poor sods of readers have to go through it twice. I can vaguely see the point of the shotgun approach but I don't think it's fair on magazines or their readers. MB.

Scanners

I WOULD LIKE some advice, I want to buy a hand scanner that's not colour and would cost around £200 - £300. Where would I be able to buy it and what software would come with it? Would I be able to use it with Neopaint and Envision Publisher? I have an IBM PS/2 and an Epson LQ-100 printer.

TAKE ON THE WAVE

FREE
'ZOO!' GAME,
PAIR OF SPEAKERS AND
DEMO GAMES BUNDLE WORTH £40!



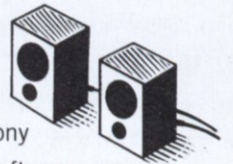
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TROUBLESHOOTER

FEATURING THE HACKMASTERS™ AND THE TRUEPLAYERS™

The Gamesplaying world is still at war. Despite the boredom of the opposing factions, the conflict proceeds ever onwards. The TruePlayers™ persist in perpetuating 'old school' games tactics (complete solutions, cryptic hints) while the HackMasters™ reply with 'new wave' game adjuncts (hacks, cracks and cheat modes). Choose your allegiance wisely, oh reader. Troubleshooter is the Lord Owen of this conflict (i.e. slightly bemused and crap).



Phone: 071 917 7689
Ask for TruePlayer™ Tips
from 2.00pm to 6.00pm
on Wednesdays only.

No other magazine can offer this kind of free service. Complete solutions, maps, cheats, hacks and all sorts of gamesplaying tips for all the latest games will be on offer – from a real person, not an answerphone. Just ring and hear us sing.

PC Zone and Dennis Publishing take no responsibility for hardware or software damage incurred from using the HackMaster's™ hacks and cracks. To destroy your computer or hardware with these hacks would take supernatural intervention (on a Sodom and Gomorrah level). We've had pond life invisible to the naked eye who have written to us to say they've used the HackMaster™ hacks successfully. If you follow the instructions to the letter you will have no problems.

The HackMasters™



WE'RE A BIT LOW ON new hacks this month due to the stashing away of all the juicier ones for the serialised HackMaster™ Conference pages. Despair not, though. We have delved very thoroughly and, some may say, subcutaneously into the intestines of *Lands Of Lore* to deliver the biggest decimation of a game ever. Put this alongside the codes for *Sink Or Swim* and a *Wing Commander Academy* cheat and you'll have plenty to be getting on with.

Backup

Most of the hacks on this page will require changing actual game files (mainly SAVEGAME files, peppered with the occasional main .EXE file). It is then sensible to back up the file specified in the hack. To do this, simply enter the directory containing the file, say for example SAVEGAME.SAV, and back it up thus:

```
COPY SAVEGAME.SAV SAVEGAME.BAK
```

If you make a bad mistake restore the files thus:

```
COPY SAVEGAME.BAK SAVEGAME.SAV
```

Hexadecimal

We count up in base 10. The PCs count up in base 16. Like this: 01, 02, 03, all the way up to 09 and then 0A (for 10), 0B (for 11), up to 0E (14) and 0F (15) and then 10, which, in decimal, is the number 16. For the HackMaster's™ experience you only really need to learn a few choice hex numbers (and remember all hex numbers on this page will be suffixed with an 'H' e.g. FFFFH).

HEX	DECIMAL	HEX	DECIMAL
0AH	10	40H	64
0FH	15	63H	99
10H	16	64H	100
20H	32	C8H	200
28H	40	FAH	250
32H	50	FFH	255

Debug

Somewhere in the depths of your DOS folder is an extremely useful program called *debug*. It allows you to edit files of all descriptions and subtly change the data. It is the program we will use most in the HackMaster Zone™ and, since it is the most user unfriendly program on this planet, I think that a brief introduction/explanation may be in order. Here's a step by step guide to a *debug* hack:

To run it just type *DEBUG* in the appropriate directory (i.e. the one mentioned in the hack blurb). It should run automatically and produce a little '>' prompt. If you get a 'file not found' style error then your DOS path hasn't been set properly. Refer to the MS DOS manual and remember: don't ring us unless it's TruePlayer™ Tips day.

```
1>NSAVE001.DAT <return>
```

Now, once you have a little '>' prompt you should type in the commands listed in the program, starting with the line above, the 'N' command. This tells *debug* which program is to be hacked. There is no space between the 'N' and the full filename.

```
2>L <return>
```

This command actually loads the file you've just specified into memory and into the awaiting hands of the hacker.

```
3>E 01 A7 v <return>
```

This is the Edit function. Type it as it appears above, i.e. with a space between the E and the address (01ED) and the 'FF' (255 in decimal).

```
4>E 0280 FF 05
```

If the edit command looks something like this (i.e. a list of numbers), then press RETURN after the address and *debug* will repeat your command. Then simply type in the values which follow (90, 90 etc.) pressing SPACE between each, except the last when you should press RETURN. So the command should be enacted thus (with what you must type in red):

```
>E 0280 <RETURN>
21FB:01F3 34.FF <space> 34.05 <return>
>
```

```
5>W <return>
```

This command writes the hacked file back onto the disk. A message saying: 'writing xxxxx bytes' will appear, where xxxxx is the size of the file (it varies). Nothing has been changed on your hard disk until you type this command. So if you've made a mistake just quit *debug* and start again.

```
6>Q <return>
```

This quits you back to DOS.

Sector editors

Some of you may possess disk sector editors such as Xtree Gold or PC Tools. It is important to note that the offset (or address) in the hacks are for *debug* which automatically adds 256 bytes (or 100 hex) to the address. So, if you prefer to use your editor, deduct 100 hex from the address. This is easier than it sounds. If an address is, say, 0141 on the page then your address will be 0041. If it's 0AA9 then you need to find offset 09A (it's just a simple case of deducting one from the third figure from the right). If in doubt, use *debug*.



Lands Of Lore



Transarctica



Wing Commander Academy



Defeat the object of testing your mettle in a Wing Commander Universe, by a) designing a easy mission and then b) cheating at it.

LANDS OF LORE (Virgin)

As part of our continuing salvo on the broadsides of TruePlayer™ mobilisations we, the HackMasters™, now proudly – nay ecstatically – present our *Lands Of Lore* MegaHack, which quite simply delivers everything for those who play with sick-bag at the ready for the merest whiff of 'elves'. Arch Emperor HackMaster™ Network has supplied this, you'll have to admit, ultra-comprehensive answer to the TruePlayer's™ not-quite-so-adequate and unnaturally long complete solution.

The method is simple. Save your game in slot one and then quit out. Backup the file SAVE001.DAT and then debug:

```

>NSAVE001.DAT
>L
>E 0141 01      Condition char 1
                  (unpoison/stun)
>E 0103 01      Condition char 2
>E 0245 01      Condition char 3
>E 017A FF 05   Hit Points char 1
>E 01FC FF 05   HPS char 2
>E 017E FF 05   HPS char 3
>E 017C FF 05   Max HPS char 1
>E 01FE FF 05   Max HPS char 2
>E 0280 FF 05   Max HPS char 3
>E 017E FF 05   Spell points char 1
>E 0200 FF 05   SPs char 2
>E 0282 FF 05   SPs char 3
>E 0180 FF 05   Max SPs char 1
>E 0202 FF 05   Max SPs char 2
>E 0284 FF 05   Max SPs char 3
>E 01A7 10      Fighter level char 1
>E 0229 10      Fighter level char 2
>E 02AB 10      Fighter level char 3
>E 01A8 10      Rogue level char 1
>E 0230 10      Rogue level char 2
>E 02AC 10      Rogue level char 3
>E 01A9 10      Mage level char 1
>E 0231 10      Mage level char 2
>E 02AD 10      Mage level char 3
>E 045A 63 63   Lots of money
>E 0456 FF      Full lantern
>E 046F v       Spell currently in use
                  by char
                  v = 00 Spark

```

```

01 Heal
02 Ice Wall
03 Fireball
04 Hands Of Fate
(unlisted)
05 Mists Of Doom
06 Lightning
>E 024A x       x = horizontal co-ord
                  of party
>E 024B y       y = vertical co-ord
                  of party
>W
>Q

```

A little explanation we feel is needed. The 'condition' line determines whether your character is stunned or poisoned or just a little 'icky'. Slipping 01 into this address cures him/her/it instantly. The 'spell currently in use by character' hack will work regardless of the state of your spell book. The main off-shoot, of course, is the ability to use the 'hidden' *Hands Of Fate* spell. The naughty Westfield boys thought they could hide it from the HackMasters™. Silly, silly boys. Also, the horizontal and vertical co-ordinates will take some experimentation. Moving left or right (regardless of walls) is achieved by adding or subtracting one from the horizontal value (024A). So, for instance, if the contents of 024A is 10, then put in 0F to move one square west or 11 for an easterly heading. Going up and down, however, is a little more complicated. You have to add or subtract the width of the current level to the 'y' value. Tricky, we'll accept, but worth it.

Now, to complete the mega rating for this hack, engage the use of your copy of PC Tools or XTree Gold. Backup the file MAIN.EXE as MAIN.BAK. For unlimited movement mode (the ability to walk, unhindered, through doors, walls, small eleven villages – anything), find 08 C0 75 20 and change it to 0B C0 EB 20. For infinite health, find 26 89 7F 39 and change it to 90 90 90 90. For infinite spell points, search out 26 89 7F 3D and swap it for 90 90 90 90, and then finally for quick attack and quick magic modes (to eliminate the forced pause between attacks) find 26 83 8F of 36 04 twice and change it both times to 90 90 90 90 90 90.

£50

For complete spoils

Send, send, send is what we say. £50.00, £50.00, £50.00 is what we pay (for complete spoils). Make any solutions as brief as possible, and any hacks or cheats clearly explained and preferably in *debug* format. Send to David McCandless at this address:

Spoiled!
Troubleshooter
PC Zone
19 Bolsover Street
London W1P 7HJ

WING COMMANDER ACADEMY

(Origin)

As is common with most Origin games, the programmers (hereto referred to as 'the boys') have left in their 'trainer' function. The HackMasters™ (hereto referred to as 'rather clever') led by Network have discovered that if you run the game with:

wca ERTS

with a space between the two words and the ERTS in capitals.

As well as creating an annoying file called LOGFILE.TXT in the GAMEDAT directory (which the game will now access continually, slowing it down a tad), the cheat mode activates certain hot keys in game:

ALT O: Hit repeatedly to cause random damage to your ship.

ALT Z: Instantly kill yourself (somewhat self-defeating).

ALT M: On screen memory display.

ALT INS: Instantly kill enemies in space.

ALT DEL: Instantly destroy current target.

SINK OR SWIM

(Zeppelin)

'The new Lemmings,' they say of Sink Or Swim.

Eminently password-able says HackMaster™ Infanta Frits W. Hoogendoorn (a Dutch name if ever we did an impression of the cook from *The Muppet Show*).

Here they come:

LEVEL CODE	LEVEL CODE
1 GRET	32 THETHIRDCIMP
2 DONT PANIC	33 SCOPESVBRYAN
3 TURINGSJOKE	34 SPLATKERPOW
4 BERTIERUSSEL	35 TOXTETHOGRADY
5 SPAMSPAMSPAM	36 MRNATURAL
6 GAME OVER	37 BEALERT
7 SPACEPIRATE	38 STTRINIANS
8 ILIKEBANANAS	39 ZELIG
9 THUXLEY	40 SMALLBLUTHING
10 ANDYSSOUP TIN	41 SOUNDCARD
11 DRACONUS	42 ORIONSSWORD
12 MRMICAWBER	43 SIDISFAB
13 ITSFROTHYMAN	44 NICKELSDIMES
14 APRILSHOWER	45 DEFECTORVAN
15 FEEDTHETREE	46 ASPACEODDITY
16 THERAINBOW	47 WOTACARRYON
17 FRBROTHERHOOD	48 TURNONTUNEIN
18 WHATSNEXT	49 IAMNOTANUMBER
19 THERIGHTSTUFF	50 ZAPCOMIX
20 CASTROVALVA	51 NEWSPAPERTAXI
21 BAHHUMBUG	52 TENPENCEPIECE
22 GOODOMENS	53 SATRESTHEORY
23 BUTNOTMIDGE	54 LITTLE ROCK
24 FJORDFIESTA	55 COGITOERGOSUM
25 GRACELAND	56 MALTHUSIAN
26 TATLINTOWER	57 ANDROIDDREAMS
27 ITSFINGERBOBS	58 GREERSBOOK
28 BOSSTAK	59 REVELATIONS
29 GUNLAW	60 PERCYSTREET
30 ANNIEBESSANT	61 CLEANUPTIME
31 NOTTHEEND	62 XENOSPARADOX

The Peace Table

This section is where the TruePlayers™ and the HackMasters™ come together for the good of gamesplaying kind to answer your 'We're stuck on level...' type queries. If you're 'stuck on level...' then write to The Peace Table at the usual address and we'll be glad to patronise you.

Eye of the Beholder III



You have to do the following moves:

1. A2-B3 2. E2-D3 3. D3-B1 4. B3-C4 5. A4-D1 6. D1-E2
7. B1-C2 8. C2-A4 9. C2-A2 10. E2-C4 11. E4-C2 12. C2-D1 13. C4-D3
14. A2-B1 15. D1-B3 16. D3-E2 17. B1-E4 18. B3-A2

Now comes the second round:

1. E3-D2 2. A3-B2 3. B2-D4 4. D2-C1 5. E1-B4 6. B4-A3
7. D4-C3 8. C3-E1 9. C1-E3 10. A3-C1 11. A1-C3
12. C3-B4 13. C1-B2 14. E3-D4 15. B4-D2 16. B2-A3 17. D4-A1

AND THE REST: 18. D2-E3

And the voice says:



Happy puzzling!

THE 7TH GUEST (Virgin)

Mrs Carisle: I forked out my £70.00 for *The 7th Guest* and boy is it giving me trouble. Two puzzles baffle me. Firstly is the toy room puzzle in the room 19 cupboard and secondly is the infernal bishops chess puzzle. Please help.

Peace Table: Okay, dokay. The toy room is simple. Just rearrange the blocks so that they end up looking like this (thanks to Mohamed and Damien for that one):

G E T

B O Y

T A D

And as for the bishop puzzles, well the diagram above might help:

TRANSARCTICA (Infogrames)

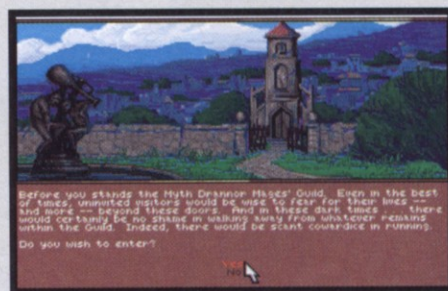
Pierre Dupont, France: Can you being help me? I am fixed in the great French game *TransArtica* and am going in no directions. Have you any cons for this game?

Paix Table: Oui do Pierre! (Ha ha). We do have some 'cons' (or cheats as we call them over here). On the options page after the title sequence, place the mouse pointer in a corner of the screen, and simultaneously press down the left mouse button, CTRL and ALT. This will give you access to the cheat modes. SUPERTRAIN will give you a ninja train, SUPERENEMY will give your opponent the same, SUPERSCEANRIO will equip your train will all objects necessary to win. Also, now, in the train combat, press the left mouse button and G to win or L to loose.

EYE OF THE BEHOLDER III
(US Gold)

Dan Graham, Hants: I'm stuck on various problems in *Eye Of The Beholder III* (bar the bad hard disk accessing and gameplay problems that is). Firstly, what do I have to get in the Mausoleum? Secondly, I'm stuck in Myth Drannor when in the Ice Chambers where the 'Ice, covered Ice' cryptic clues are. Thirdly, I opened a column Mage Guild, used some keys, killed some stone monsters, and now I've discovered a place where some rings are stored in holes in the wall and there's an ancient scale there too. Can you help?

Peace Table: Of course we can Dan. Numero uno is simple. The Mausoleum is an 'optional' part of the game and it's not necessary to do anything in it. There are no juicy items there. Your second problem's solution is as follows: for 'Ice, covered Ice' use a diamond, for 'Do you fear for your child' is a fear wand, and 'choose wisely' needs nothing. Your last problem is a little trickier. Turn to face the scale and insert the rings into the niches in this order (left/right): +3 -3, +1 -1, -2 +2, -2 +2.



Eye Of The Beholder III: Gameplay Improvement Hack coming soon (maybe).

TROLLS (Flair)

Graham, Leicester: I'm playing *Trolls* and I can't get very far. Can you help?

Peace Table: Yes. Enter the TROLLS directory and backup the file TROLLVGA.PCN and then debug:

> NTROLLVGA.PCN

> L

> E 5CB6 90 90 90 90 90

> E A3BA 90 90 90 90 90

> E A482 90 90 90 90 90

> W

> Q

This will give you infinite lives.

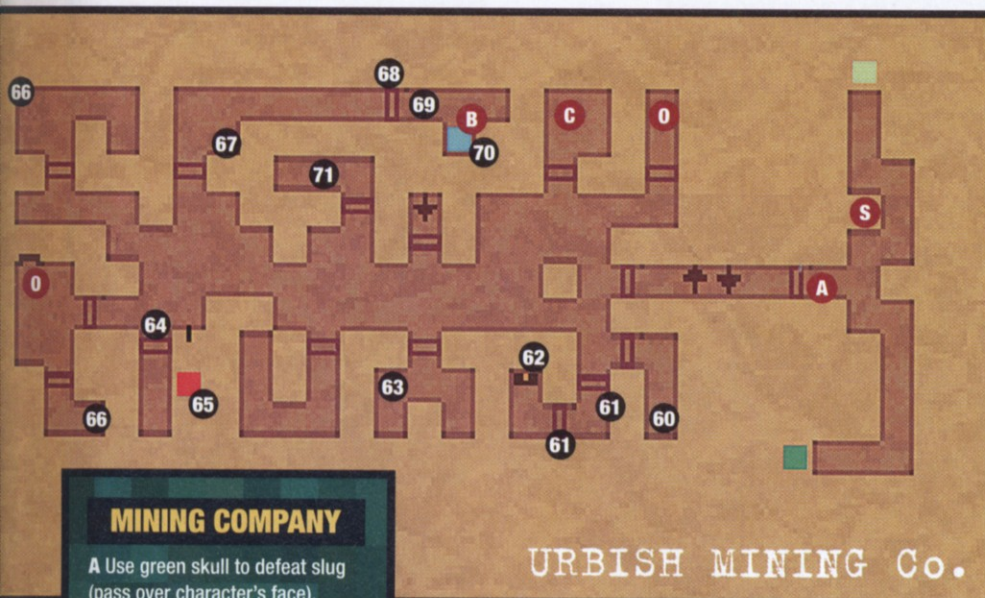
TRUEPLAYER™ TIPS



The bottom line is that you'll have to have a specky chromosome in your genes to achieve maximum satisfaction from the HackMaster's™ experience. If you are not very brave or are having teething troubles then the bottom line is 'Do not ring us' unless it is the TruePlayer™ tips day (Wednesday).

LANDS OF LORE

PART TWO



MINING COMPANY

- A Use green skull to defeat slug (pass over character's face).
- B Pickaxe
- C Fireball scroll.
- S Swarm
- O Oil flask
- L Lockpicks
- 60 Salve and Fireball scroll.
- 61 Close one before opening other door.
- 62 Chest: silver key, mace 'Bouncer' (12,1).
- 63 2 silver coins.
- 64 Use lock picks to open door.
- 65 Machine.
- 66 Salve.
- 67 Helm.
- 68 Secret button.
- 69 Oil flask + 2 silver coins.
- 70 Clerk's Office (pickaxe, great helm 0, 11)
- 71 Lockpicks.

And so the complete spoil for *Lands Of Lore* rolls on and on. Gathering no moss is **Robin Matthews**, who will explain the relative virtues of being confused by the ramshackle design of the Urbish Mines and discussing further his TruePlayer™ symposium on *The City Of Yvel: Why Do These Place Names Have To Be So Unpronounceable*. His book *Elves: A Good Reason For Genocide* will be out next month.



AFTER LAST MONTH YOU should now be aware that you have several 'quests'. Firstly, you must recover the Nether Mask from Scotia (to save the world as we know it). Secondly, locate four parts of a healing elixir (to save King Richard as we know him), and finally to find the four parts of the key to reach the King. Part one of this detailed guide left us outside the Urbish Mines, with one part of the key (Dawn's), two parts of the elixir (the honey and swamp mud) and with four magic spells inscribed in the spell book (Heal, Sparks, Freeze and Lightning). Note that you cannot negotiate the Mines unless you have the green skull from Upper Opinwood.

The Urbish Mines

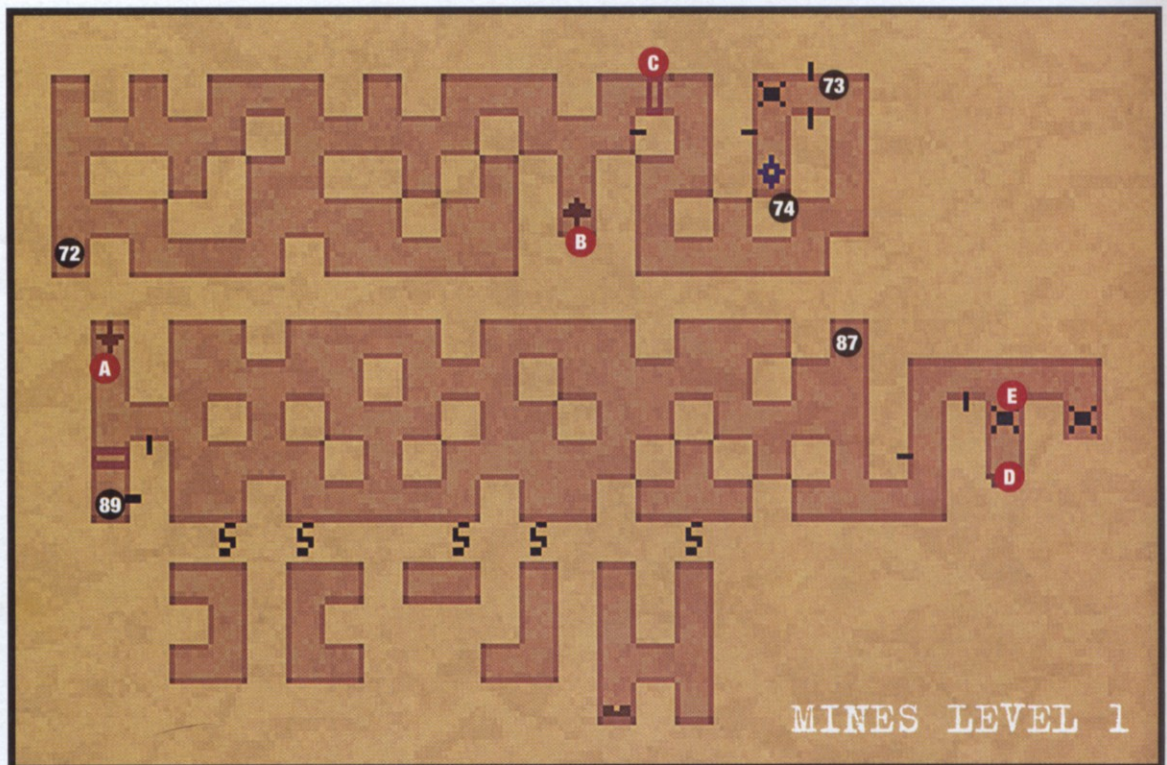
Okay, having set the scene its down to business. The Urbish Mines are a five level complex, with The Mining Co. as ground level and four regions below – it is tricky and possibly the most confusing location in the game. As per the earlier caves the levels are inter-connected and there'll be a lot of to-ing and fro-ing between levels. Combat is frequent and tough, so save often and preferably in out of the way places. Busy thoroughfares seem to carry a higher incident of encounters, and some monster generators appear unlimited and get more active the more often you visit a level.

The first monster can only be defeated using the green skull, and you may have to use the 'shut that door and heal' routine to rejuvenate your magic points. Once this ferocious beastie is dispatched you enter the Urbish Mining Company; i.e. ground level. The Fireball scroll is at location 60, and at 61 close the door you've just come through to allow the second to open to get the silver key. Note the position of the machine at 65 for later and pick up the various goodies throughout this level. Make sure that you visit the Clerk at 70, get a pickaxe and maybe a Great Helm (0 might, 11 protection). The only route down is the stairway just north of the main corridor, which takes you into the northern section of level one.

Level one is divided in two. Access to the southerly section is only achieved by going down to level two and back up another way. The north section is straightforward: use the silver key to reach the two wheels at location 73.

MINES LEVEL 1

- A From level 2.
- B Up to Urbish Mine Company.
- C Silver key lock.
- D Mine key 2 (again)
- E Pit to level 2
- 72 There's something here.
- 73 Wheels.
- 74 Teleport to level 2.
- 87 Mine key 2, emerald blade, bones.
- 89 Use wheel to make pit to level 2.



MINES LEVEL 1

Turn the south wheel and press the button to go back to the entrance of the mines; turn both to create a pit, or turn the north wheel only to make a teleport at 74. Perform the latter and use the teleport to move to level two at location 75. This is a single square with illusory walls in all four cardinal directions. Go north first and press the two buttons on walls to the west and east. This opens up two corridors. The right hand one gives you the Lightning scroll while the left corridor takes you to another set of wheels where left, right, centre is the combination. There are some bits of hardware up here, and its worth saving here to make sure that you don't press too many buttons and get stuck.

Go back up to location 75, go south, and open up the walls. Weigh down the plate at 81 to open up the area west and pick up mine key 4. Nip back to 75 and go west. Use key 4 to open up the westerly walls. There's not much you can do here yet, except note the flooded stairwell. Go back again to 75 and head east. Open up the two corridors and take the northerly option. Weigh down the plates as you go to limit the hot reception - you can get a wand of Fireballs at location 84. If you can already cast this spell you can avoid getting roasted, but for masochists this is a must.

It's hard isn't it?

Now go back to the start of this easterly section and go down the south corridor. At the smell step one back and invoke a fireball, by spell or wand. The gas will ignite and the ensuing explosion will open up a new area and at location 85 mine key 5. A word of warning here: the monsters are very tough and must be fireballed as soon as they are in range - perhaps you'll need that wand after all?

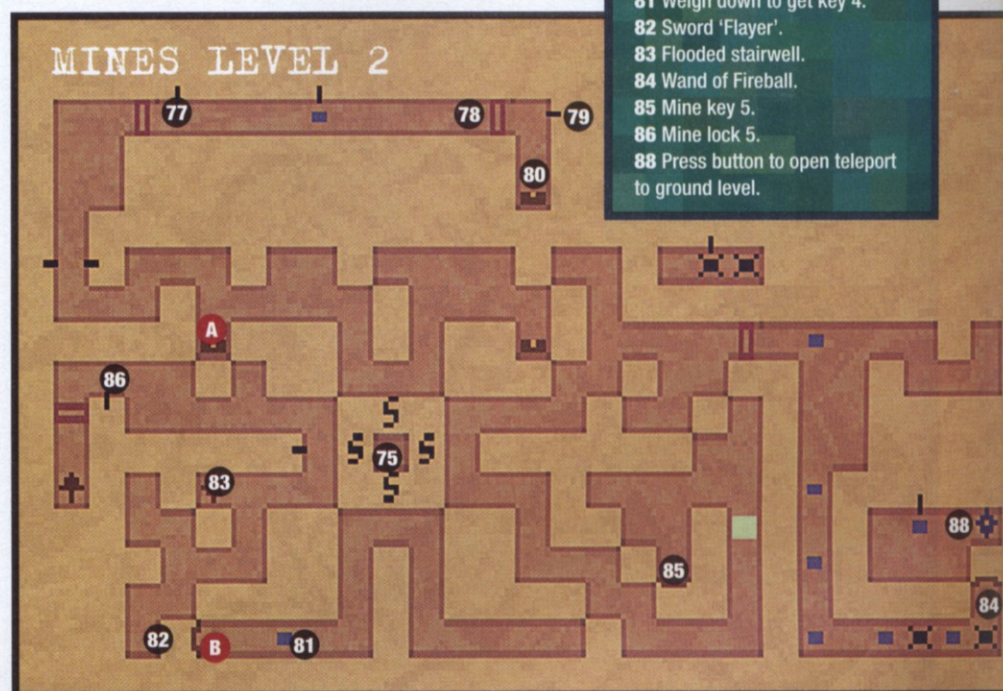
Anyway, the key was what you needed and this will open up the strange-looking lock at location 86. Go up the stairs; you are now in the southern part of level one. This is an odd section with Bart Simpson look-alikes attacking you from every angle. Location 87 will give you a first mine key 2 and going through the south-east secret wall will give you a second mine key 2. One of these would get you out of this area - if there wasn't now a pit behind you! Down is the only way to go, taking you to a small pit in level two. Weigh down the pressure plate at 88 and press the button that appears to create a teleport. This will then take you all the way back to ground level.

Now go back down the stairs to level one, then use the teleport at 74 to 75 on level two. Go west to the stairs at 86 and then back up into the southern part of level one. Use a mine key 2 to get access to location 89 and turn the wheel. This will drop you into level three. This is a pretty difficult part of the game with you regularly being attacked by some really quite tough flying serpents. These can be defeated, but seem to get thicker and faster as the game progresses. Throughout level three there is a series of nests - give these a fiery welcome and this should destroy the monster generators. Note that if you don't do this the level almost becomes completely unplayable at a later stage in the game.

At location 92 the silver key will open up the rest of this section; in particular the secret passage at 93. Pick the chest at 96 to get the Golden Jewel which will unlock the strange lock. You are now standing at the top of the

MINES LEVEL 2

- A Pit down to level 3.
- B Mine key 4.
- 75 Teleport from level 1 (74)
- 76 Lightning scroll, oil flask.
- 77 Button to activate puzzle.
- 78 Door
- 79 Button. To open 78 put left lever up and right lever down. To open 77, weigh down the plate, put left lever up and the right lever down.
- 80 Dwarvish helm (0,8), bezel cup, star 'shooting', 25 silver coins.
- 81 Weigh down to get key 4.
- 82 Sword 'Flayer'.
- 83 Flooded stairwell.
- 84 Wand of Fireball.
- 85 Mine key 5.
- 86 Mine lock 5.
- 88 Press button to open teleport to ground level.



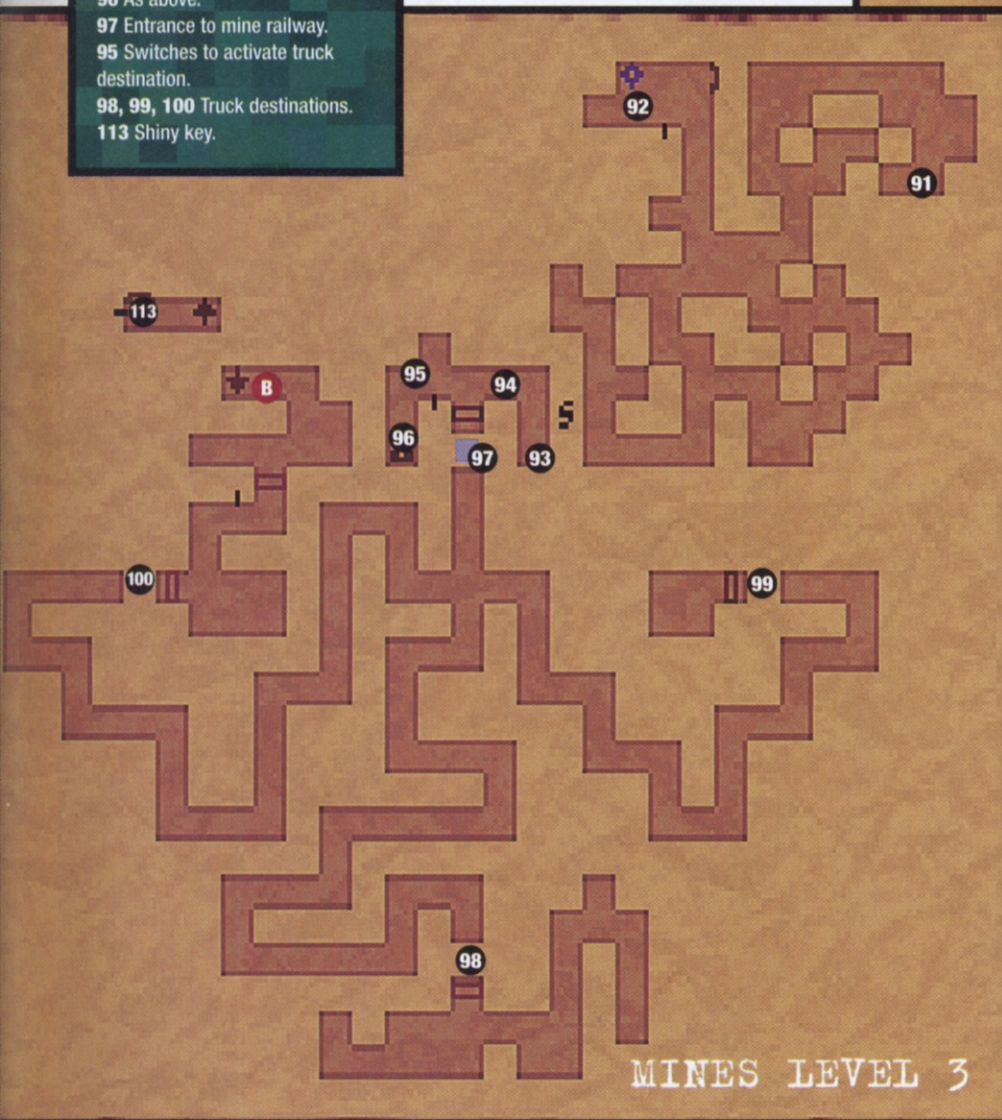


MINES LEVEL 3

- A** This area is opened when the stairwell is unflooded.
B To level four.
C Use pick to get coal.
91 Note: Piscata Rosea 4,4, 5.
92 Use silver key
93 Secret passage.
94 I'm not sure why this has been labelled.
95 Ditto.
96 As above.
97 Entrance to mine railway.
95 Switches to activate truck destination.
98, 99, 100 Truck destinations.
113 Shiny key.

MINES LEVEL 4

- A** To level 3.
S Spinner squares.
101 Push button to create teleport at 102.
102 Teleport.
103 Press buttons to stop fireballs from 104.
104 Fireball traps.
105 Something here.
106 Use picks to clear rockfalls.
107 Ghost and rusty key.
108 Water pump and note. Gear wheel.
109 Rusty key lock.
110 Use shiny key.
111 Mine key 4.
112 Teleporter to 101.
114 Paulson and Paulson's key.
116 Mine key 4, Vaelen cube, dwarven boots, chain mail, helm.
117 Mine key 4 lock.



mine railway; the switches operate a series of points which will take you to three different locations in the southern half of level three as follows:

Both levers up will take you to location 98 where you can use a pick to gather coal (you'll need this later). Left lever down, right lever up takes you to location 100. Left lever up, right lever down takes you to location 99.

Go to 100, pick the lock and go down the stairs to level four. Push the button to make the teleport appear at 102, and then travel through it to 103. Turn around and press the button here to stop the fireballs. In this area there are many stone monsters. Slay two or three to gain a Bloodstone: the third ingredient of the elixir. At the crossroads 'S' there is a spinner square with wheels on all the cardinal points. To make life easier use the compass and turn each wheel so that the handle is at the bottom - this will then stop the spinner.

Industrial revolution

Use a pick at 106 to clear a way through, and at 107 have a seance and get the rusty key. This is the first of two keys needed to get through the southern limb. At 108 again search the bones to reveal a note and an essential item. This is what is needed to facilitate an industrial 'revolution' up at ground level. Use the teleport at 111 to travel back to 101 and then walk up the stairs to level three. Work your way back to the teleport at 92 to get back to ground level. Go to the broken machine, add the gear and fuel up the boiler (you can use the pick on level three).

Pull the top handle to start the Water Pump which will 'un-flood' the stairs at 83 on level two. Pause for breath now, you have almost finished this difficult part of the game. Go to the now accessible stairway and get the shiny key from 113. You'll find the swivel square confusing so use the compass. This will complement the rusty key. By pit and stairs negotiate your way back to location 110 on level four (one possible route is as follows: 73, 89, 86, 90, railway to 100 then down to level four).

YVEL WOODS



YVEL WOODS

- 120 Encounter (Vaelan Cube 2)
- 121 Swarm
- 122 Arnablast Equalizer, shield and stealth.

At 110 use the shiny key, which, if you have used the rusty key at 109, will open up to Paulson. He will join you and make sure that you take his pyramid key (this should now be key 3). On the way out look south to uncover his cache: the Vaelan Cube is crucial and the mine key 4 will then open up the door north-east at 111. (note that if, when playing *Lands Of Lore*, you completed the Urbish Mines before speaking to Dawn at Opinwood you will not get the Vaelan Cube from Paulson - go and see Dawn and she will give it to you) Use the northern-most teleport to warp back to ground level.

This completes the Urbish Mines and long may they rest. Now gird your loins and head back to Upper Opinwood. A word of advice here: as long as you have your honey in a bottle, casting fireballs on the hornet nests seems to destroy the monster generators for those pesky flying insects. Travel up to Scotia's Barrier and use the Vaelan Cube twice at close range (pass the cube over the face of a party member). The Cube and Barrier will disappear and you will move onto the next stage of *Lands Of Lore*.

The city and woods of Yvel

After the long slog in the mines it's nice to be in the open air again - Yvel Woods links together several locations: Upper Opinwood, Yvel and the White Tower. These can be attempted in any order you like but the latter is pretty hard so this solution will cover the city of Yvel and then the White Tower.

The woods are easy enough, with the only real combat being around location 120. One of these monsters, when eventually defeated, will drop a second Vaelan Cube which you will need to break down another of the Scotia barriers. This will then open the way up to Yvel itself and subsequent events.

Yvel is a well-crafted sleepy sort of town, heavy on mist and items. Most are listed on the enclosed map and the place is worth a leisurely stroll. Call in at Victor's Arms to buy and sell, the Fletchers for some new bows, and why not have a pint at Bruno's Lodge where a grateful friend will repay earlier kindness. The Dwarvish plate mail (location 129) is especially potent (0, 49) and the Aces can be used as one-off spells. Sadie (location 130) will help, but you need to have either had help from the swamps Witch Doctor or speak to the Council at location 137.

Sadie will now give you the Mother of Earth, the fourth and final ingredient of the elixir which must now be mixed and bound within the confines of the imposing White Tower.



CITY OF YVEL

The White Tower

You should now have all four parts of the elixir (swamp water, honey, bloodstone and Mother of Earth) and two pyramid keys (from Dawn and/or Paulson). Magic-wise you should have spells of Sparks, Healing, Freezing, Fireball and Lightning.

The White Tower consists of three levels and a 'sub-level'. Combat is fairly tough with two monster generators producing a continuous flow of Archer Slugs. There are two grills on level one (at locations 144) which, if closed, stop these venomous slime bags. The other main inhabitants are the buxom Amazons. They are scantily dressed and don't like the cold - so don't forget that you can also use the Freeze spell as a weapon. When you first enter the tower, beat off the amazons at location 141 to get mystic key 1. Go up the north/south corridor but don't use the stairs yet. Use the first mystic key at 146 to get mystic key 2. There are some useful items including the Dwarvish kite shield at 145 and the Vega Star at 143.

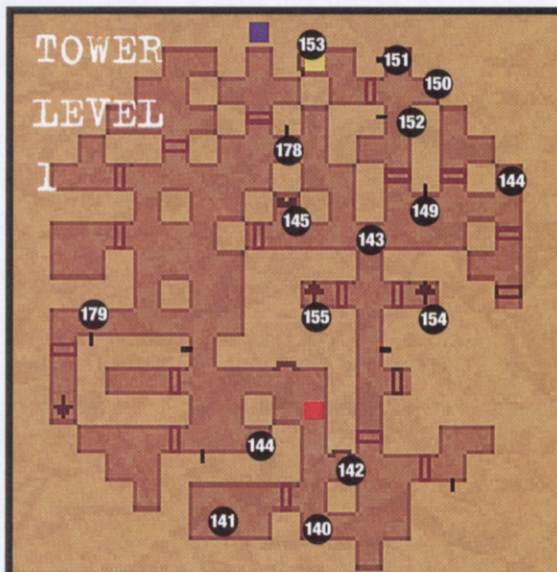
Use mystic key 2 at location 149 and defeat the amazons to get mystic key 3. Press the button at 152 and then use the third key on the nearby lock to free the prisoner. Woah! Hang on a minute. Before you rush off, press the button at 153 to reveal the Amber Ring. This answers

CITY OF YVEL

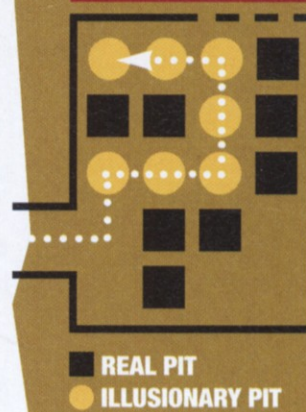
- 123 Ace of Oblivion, oil flask.
- 124 Shirt.
- 125 Aegis Helm (0,10)
- 126 Oil flask.
- 127 Silent sandals, bezel cup.
- 128 Oil flask, granite rock, bracers (0,5).
- 129 Dwarvish plate mail (0,49).
- 130 Sadie's shop (Mother of Earth).
- 131 Arnablast redemption, sandals.
- 132 Ace of Dominion.
- 133 Torn shirt.
- 134 Victor's arms.
- 135 Halberds - widow and sever.
- 136 Ace of Infinity.
- 137 Council chamber.
- 138 Bruno's lodge (whisper cloak).

TOWER LEVEL 1

- 140 Rapier 'Talon'.
- 141 Mystic key 1.
- 142 'Ring For Admittance'.
- 143 Star 'Vega'.
- 144 Close grills to stop Archer Slugs.
- 145 Chest (use pick locks), Dwarvish kite shield (0,15), star 'Fine', oil flask.
- 146 Mystic lock 1.
- 147 Mystic lock 2.
- 148 Pick lock.
- 149 Mystic lock 2.
- 150 Encounter and mystic key 3.
- 151 Button.
- 152 Button.
- 153 Prisoner and amber ring.



PIT DIAGRAM



the punny request at 142 which opens up the rest of level one. Beat Jana, the Amazon Queen to win the Great Sword 'Trouble' (38,0) and another mystic key (4).

Now return to the two sets of stairs and go up at 154 to level two for mystic key 5. Retrace your steps and go up the other stairs. Use mystic key 5 at location 156, and pick the lock at 157. This room contains a series of pits, some of which are real, some are illusions. The diagram above charts a safe course and will get you to location 158.

The pits

Take the mystic key (6) and press the button. This will now remove a pit at 161, allowing you to press the button at 162, removing the pit at 163 and giving access to the secret passage to the northern complex. There is not very much in this area, except for the four buttons on the east-west corridor. Back in the south section enter the dark room at 166 and close the door. Now press the button and see what develops (mystic key 7). Use this key at location 167 and then walk up to level three. Another key 7 is to be found in the Fireball room.

Just before we leave level two, if you fall down a pit on level three, you end up at location 174 with a particularly nasty foe. Beat him and you get a horn (use this at 175 to leave) and a potent weapon in the maul 'Thunder' (56, 0).

Level three of the White Tower is easy. Simply press the floor button at 168 to get mystic key 8 which opens the lock at 169. Press the button at 171 to go east and then walk through the secret passage in the north room. Location 173 is solved by pressing the button and then throwing an item west across the pit (you may need to equip a missile weapon to achieve this) - this should now close the pit, otherwise its Minotaur time! At 174 go through the secret passage and pick the chest for mystic key 9. Move up to location 176, open up the door with mystic key 6 and then grab the ivory key.

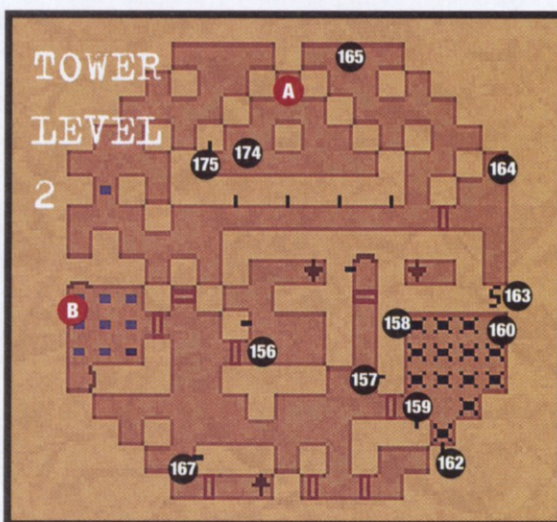
Travel all the way down to level one and use the other key 7 at location 178. Fight your way through this area and at location 179 use the ivory key to gain access to the tower sub-level. This contains a single puzzle in which you must chase down (you can do this by just standing still!) the four items and put one in each of the alcoves. If you get this right the teleport is disabled and then at 181 use mystic key 9. Meet the old woman and you will be given the Crucible of Faith.

The White Tower is almost complete, and although the main plot line will take you to the Altar De Blanca, its possession will also grant you entrance to the 'You Have No Faith Door' on level three. This lets you 'take your pick' from one of two chests.

Place the crucible at the altar and in it mix the four ingredients (swamp mud, hornet honey, bloodstone and Mother of Earth). Once the recipe has worked take the crucible and head back to the Council in Yvel.

TOWER LEVEL 2

- A Minotaur.
- B Fireball room.
- 156 Mystic lock 5.
- 157 Pick lock.
- 158 Mystic key 6 (use at 159)
- 159 Lock.
- 160 Pit Room.
- 161 Important pit.
- 162 Button.
- 163 Removeable pit.
- 164 Rapier 'Talon'.
- 165 Helm 'Prentis'.
- 166 The Dark Room (mystic key 7).
- 167 Use key 7.



TOWER LEVEL 3

- 168 Press button on floor for mystic key 8.
- 169 Use key 8.
- 170 Dagger 'Fang', salve, 4 crowns.
- 171 Press button to open up passage to east.
- 172 Long sword 'Protector'.
- 173 Throw item across pit and close pit by pressing button.
- 174 Minotaur room.
- 175 Dwarvish boots, mystic key, staff tarsal.
- 176 Use key 6.
- 177 Ivory key.
- 178 Sabre 'Cougar', salve, bannon reserve.
- 179 Wand of Lightning, bannon reserve 2.
- 180 'You have no faith'.
- 181 Long sword 'Entropy'.



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SEND YOUR POST TO: **WORDPROCESSOR, PC ZONE, 19 BOLSOVER ST. LONDON W1P 7HJ**



Senaca, Saint Paul and Lord Byron all achieved fame and, in some cases, fortune through writing letters. Now you

can join their exalted ranks by writing to PC Zone. This is your chance to let the readers of PC Zone benefit from the wisdom of your latest ponderings on the games market, or to simply let off steam about the latest software outrage. As if the free (albeit metaphorical) soapbox wasn't incentive enough, there's a free game for each month's star letter.

Sound Off

A BRIEF NOTE TO Paul. How on earth can you say that the PC games market will be like the Amiga's (Wordprocessor issue four) when the Soundboard industry insists on using FM music rather than the much simpler method of having four or more sampling channels like the Amiga, and the Videoboard industry doesn't come up with some custom graphics chips so the PC can compete with the Amiga's superior graphics handling routines.

Mark Thompson, South Woodham Ferrers, Essex

286 Miracles

THIS IS A letter from a very happy owner of an Acer 915V 12MHz 286. I am writing to tell you how angry I am that most software that can be played on a 4MHz Amiga such as *Syndicate* can only be used on a 386 PC. Why?

My friend owns a 486 and has just purchased *X-Wing*. Just for curiosity I installed it on my 286. It worked! But it said CPU: 386 or higher on the box and in your review in issue one you also claimed it only ran on a 386 or higher. Personally, I thought there wasn't any difference between the versions on the 486 and on my 286.

And with only 1Mb of memory it coped with AdLib music and maximum detail running at an acceptable playable speed!

So does this mean that if I try some games written for 386s I might be able to use them?

Dominic Evans, Barry, South Wales

Occasionally a company will specify a machine more powerful than the bare minimum necessary to run a game if they think that the level of performance on the

less powerful machine is so poor as to make the game not worth playing, so yes, you will sometimes be able to run 386 games on your 286 but they'll not be the fastest/smoothest you've ever seen. I am... er... surprised that you couldn't see any difference in performance between *X-Wing* on your machine and your friend's. **Ed.**

Anti Wargame Lobby

I HAVE JUST read your review of *Clash Of Steel* from SSI and wonder if this is another case of snobbery against wargames. It seems that as soon as a reviewer finds out that a game is a wargame it gets automatically marked down. The reviewer says that '*Clash Of Steel* is still the best effort at a computerised simulation of the war in Europe, with good graphics, a neat interface and above average gameplay.' So why does it merit a score of 67? By his own admission it is a good wargame so it deserves a higher score - at least in the 70s. It is unfair to compare *Clash Of Steel* to a flight simulation or RPG since they are entirely different. *Clash Of Steel* should be compared to its rivals. After all, you could not say that *Tornado* is a better game than *Flashback* since they are from different genres. This low rating will not deter me or another wargaming fan from purchasing *Clash Of Steel* since I am accustomed to adding an extra ten to 20 percent on any score for a wargame. However a low rating like this could put off someone who might be tempted to try their hands at a wargame. I am sure that if they were to try a wargame they would find it fun. Apart from this I find *PC Zone* to be an excellent publication with well informed reviewers.

Mark S. Nicholson, Old Southgate, London

Obviously different people have different tastes in games and tend to be biased towards or against certain genres. That's why we always try to make sure that games are reviewed by reviewers who are fans of its particular style. So Duncan reviews *Tornado* and Andrew Wright reviews *Clash Of Steel* - he can hardly be accused of being anti wargame since they are the games he plays most. (Check out his wargame feature in issue six.) **Ed.**

McCarthyism

PATRICK, AM I the only person to pick up on the number of Nabokovian references in *PC Zone* issue seven?

Apart from your mentioning *Lolita*, Humbert-Humbert and Mandy Smith there was also further reference in the Anime feature to 'The Japanese Lolita syndrome'. Are you a Nabokov fan?

Jeff Richards, Hove, Sussex

Cheapside Stateside

I WOULD LIKE the answer to a question that has been nagging me ever since I got my first PC. Why is everything so much cheaper in the States than in the UK? I realise that now the exchange rate is about 1.5 dollars to the pound, but back when it was between 1.8 and 1.9, you could buy a £1,200 PC for \$1,500, from a similar brand. You could now buy a 486 there for the price of a 386sx here. The same is true for software. US prices are 40% less

than UK prices; even when the company in question has a UK base. I'm not saying that everybody should buy their software and hardware from the US; duty postage would bring prices closer to the point where the difference wouldn't be worth the hassle. Is it surprising that US-based games like *Ultima* require Ninja PCs to run at a respectable pace. However, maybe the situation has changed. Is this still the case?

Supraj Rajagopalan, Woodstock, Oxford

There are numerous factors involved, including economies of scale (due to the size of the American market), the strength of the discount market in the states, pricing traditions and taxation. Software is by no means unique in costing less in one country than another. Have you ever bought a beer in Iceland? **Ed.**

Fan Club

WE THINK that you should employ more like the cool and silently violent Laurence Scotford and the not so violent but still cool Czech subtitle, David McCandless.

James Sinton/James Ellis, Irthlingborough, Northamptonshire

This office is dangerous enough as it is. **Ed.**

More Blood Please

THIS IS THE SECOND time I am writing this letter because the last time, Wordstar screwed up and I lost the letter so this is likely to be less kind and understanding.

Firstly, I buy your magazine every month; that is I bludgeon my friend into buying it and then steal it and I have no wish to pick any bones with you (unless you insisted). What I do have to say is this: I have had a PC for about six months and I am distinctly under the impression that PC games are, shall we say, entertainingly challenged. The market seems to have disproportionately high numbers of graphic adventures, flight sims, war games and, worst of all, RPGs. I have eagerly turned the pages of your magazine with a quivering hand in the hope of finding something that doesn't feature Zargoth the Magnificent's quest to find the Talisman of Morgoth and rid the world of Targon the evil Necromancer of Redlor. Why aren't there more things like *Wolfenstein 3D*. I have noticed a slight improvement recently with *Space Hulk* (which was a bit too much like an RPG for my taste but at least the blood was there) and *X-Wing* which was loin tinglingly superb, but I fear that the PC market is still being influenced by a bunch of lonely old men with about as much charisma as a two week old hedgehog foetus.

Secondly, I was moved by Andy Butcher's stirring review of *Syndicate* and had put on my hat and coat ready to go out and make a purchase when my eyes drifted onto the specs column and I was hit in the face so hard that it still smarts, by the words 'Minimum Memory: 3Mb'. (I realise that the number three doesn't really count as a word and, as a matter of fact, neither does a colon - but try to ignore that.) Why couldn't the Bullfrog

LETTER OF THE MONTH

Each month we award a piece of software to the month's star letter. It's quality rather than quantity that counts, just because the last couple of winners happen to have been letters of epic proportions there's no need to all start trying to rewrite *War And Peace*. Brevity has its own value.

PC Pain

HEEEEE!!!!!! It has been some time now since I saw the light of day. For what could have been days, weeks or even months, I have been confined to the cramped conditions of the study in our attic, desperately trying to get to grips with the wretched beast that is my new 486. When I first saw it on display on Tottenham Court Road, being hypnotised by the SVGA graphics being demonstrated, I was compelled to find out more about it. I had been looking around for a new computer for some time and it wasn't as though I hadn't done any research on the matter. When I told a friend in the know about its specs he whistled and said they were very good, in fact, several of my learned friends said so too. I had a bit more of a look around and decided to buy it.

Previously, I had an Amiga 500 and I was very happy and content. The Amiga was perfect for most types of game but the more I looked around, the more I felt it was time to move onto higher things. With the Amiga, all you had to do was turn on the computer, put the disk into the drive and it would load. There, no fuss just sit back and relax while it whirled and hummed to itself. With the PC it's not hard to load a program but this is symbolic of the many, more complex things I will have to learn to put up with.

I bought myself one of those 'Idiot' Guides to PC's (and like an idiot I left in a restaurant on the way home!) which was useful up to a point, but when it got to the more important subjects it forgot that it was an idiot it was meant to be talking to. After crying for a few days I consoled myself with a mug of Horlicks and a digestive and then had a very long chat with one of my PC guru friends. I learnt the very bare basics from him and got ready to ram the PC's superiority over consoles down the throats of a few console-owning friends of mine.

All was looking fine and dandy until I read your last issue; specifically a letter concerning MS DOS 6 and a problem with 214Mb hard disks and *Ultima*. I have MS DOS 6 AND 214Mb of hard disk and when I read that there was some sort of problem with this I ran to the bathroom to find a razor blade and slash my wrists. I had bought my PC hoping it would be one of the best. It runs at 66MHz, has 256K cache (whatever that may be) SVGA plus monitor and a lot of the other stuff that everyone said was very good.

Surely I can't be the only new comer to PC's who is suffering from a 'Mr Cursor' related disease? If there are any more of you out there, I have decided to set up a therapy group where we could all sit round a circle drinking more mugs of Horlicks and discussing items of software we will probably never learn how to use.

Mehmet Aydemir, Palmers Green, London

programmers just take that little bit more effort to make it 2Mb like they did on the Amiga 1200. Surely I can't be the only person in the world with a sad 2Mb 386. Don't use the 'you should get a better machine' excuse either because I paid for every chip, byte and piece of plastic with my own hard earned cash.

Generally, what I am saying is: Why are PC games crap? And why did the market wait until I got a 386sx before dumping on it?

Severely Annoyed, Bristol

To question one the answer is, they're not. The PC games market did used to be completely dominated by RPGs and Flight Sims but each month there's more and more variety as the PC becomes recognised as a fully fledged games machine. As for your second question: well I'm afraid that's life. Ed.

Mouse Drivers

AT THE MOMENT your magazine is in the same price bracket as a Van Gogh painting. In fact the only reason I get it is because my girlfriend thinks it's funny, but that may well be laughing at you rather than with you.

The reason I am writing is to do with X-Wing and the letter from Bod of Burtonwood, Cheshire. I too had the same problem as Bod in that the cursor would only go half way across the menu screens. I found that it was my mouse driver that was at fault, even though the driver works perfectly well with most other software. If Bod at least disables the mouse driver and uses the cursor keys to wander about the menu screens, he may find the problem solved.

As for the letter from David Clish, what's he buying such a powerful machine for when he can't even free up memory? It's like having an expensive sports car and not being able to drive!

Dan Morris, Withington, Manchester

When did you last buy a Van Gogh for £2.95? Ed.

Quitting Zool

WHY ON EARTH didn't you tell us how to quit out of the demo of Zool? Although its a pretty good game I did want to quit. After trying a large number of escape sequences (including CTRL, ALT, DEL) I found out that I simply needed to press F10 to escape back to DOS.

Too bad about the Ashes.

Ross Stewart, N.S.W., Australia

Sink or swim

I RECEIVED issue seven of PC Zone this morning and I was delighted to see that it had three cover disks attached. 'Good value for money' I thought. I was less pleased when I realised that the first disk contained *Sink Or Swim*, which had appeared two weeks earlier on the PC Home cover disk. Plagiarism? I had come to expect a high quality of cover disk from PC Zone; one of the main reasons I subscribe. In just six months you had brought exclusives like *Simon The Sorcerer* and *Freddy Pharkas*, not just crammed the disks with shareware. However, there seems to be an increasing trend of duplication between cover disks on leisure/games magazines. Surely you could communicate with each other to avoid this, as it is in everyone's

interests in the long term. I have found all your other cover disks to be great and more full demos, like *Simon The Sorcerer*, on HD disks and unique to PC Zone would be appreciated.

Andrew Zucker, Borehamwood, Herts

Our aim is always to bring our readers high quality and exclusive cover disk demos. In the case of *Sink Or Swim*, as with all our disks, we were told that the demo was exclusive to PC Zone. If you were 'less pleased' I can assure you it was nothing to what we were! Ed.

Rolling In The Garden

PLEASE DON'T become boring old farts and change your review styles as some people have recently been suggesting. I want to see more reviews like *3D Garden Design*, which had me rolling around in the aisles.

Jim Grimwood, Hatfield, Hertfordshire

Jeux Sans Frontiers

I JUST ENTERED the competition you organised in your issue six (Sound Blaster CD16 Discovery Pack) and I now wonder whether, being an overseas subscriber (I'm French), I can participate in the draw. Competitions are often limited to national residents; is yours limited to UK residents?

I discovered your magazine two months ago while I was studying at University in this country of yours (loved it incidentally). (The mag or the country? Ed.) Your magazine hits the spot; I couldn't go back to France without getting a subscription. I'm now waiting impatiently for my next months copy; I hope the Stella Artois won't be long to arrive either.

Pierre Alaphilippe, Limoges, France.

Unless otherwise stated our competitions are open to overseas readers. Ed.

Sexuality

IN AN EARLY issue of PC Zone I remember you got a letter in from someone complaining about, firstly the lack of female writers on your staff, and secondly the distinct tendency towards a 'boys down the pub together' style of writing and humour. You seemed to accept the criticism and muttered something about being more careful in other issues.

So how do you explain the last issue which seemed to be almost devoted to pictures of scantily clad girls (and I mean girls, not women) in schoolboy smut poses. If this is an example of your being more careful, I'd hate to see the magazine if you really let yourselves go.

N. Blount, Caversham, Berks

Bye Bye?

WHAT ON EARTH has happened to the Buyers Guide. It was a really useful part of the magazine, even if it kept changing. Now it seems to have vanished without trace. Please bring it back.

R. Pitman, Bradford, W. Yorks

The Buyers Guide will make a return in a new and even better form in the New Year. Ed.

NB. We reserve the right to edit letters for bad grammar, libel or just 'cause we feel like it.

ANOTHER GREY BOX?



Auva/33

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FDD: 3.5" 1.44Mb
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Memory: 4Mb on board expandable to 32Mb
Bios: Ami Bios
Cache: 256Kb memory cache
Video Adapter: 1Mb Windows Accelerator
Monitor: 14" SVGA MPR11
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Motherboard: Vesa
Memory: 4Mb on board expandable to 32Mb
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Cache: 256Kb memory cache
Video Adapter: 1Mb Windows Accelerator
Monitor: 14" SVGA MPR11
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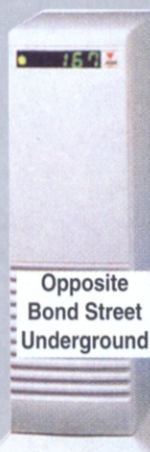
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TRAPPER

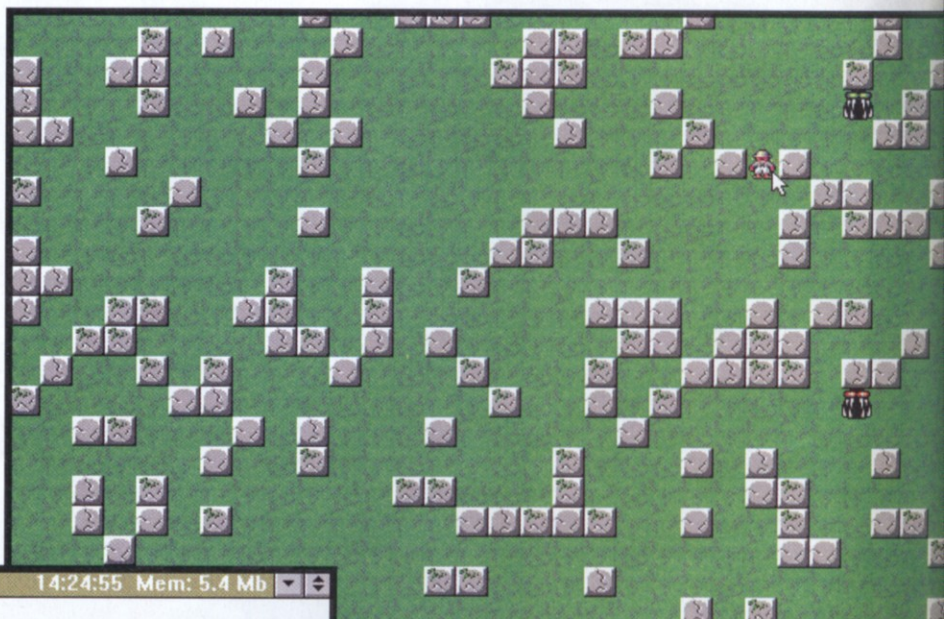
TRAPPER IS A SIMPLE maze type strategy game which entails guiding Trapper Travis from one side of the screen to the other. To hinder his progress, several fearsome beasts lie in hiding along the route. Each creature will only appear on the screen when it comes within sight of Trapper Travis, so it may sometimes appear as if there is a perfectly clear and safe path to the exit when, in fact, two or three beasts are waiting.

The creatures, all slightly larger than Travis, always try to move towards him and can be trapped between two single blocks at diagonals with each other. It is therefore possible to lure them into an arrangement of blocks from which they are unable to escape.

At the start of each level, you are given a score of 2000. Each move you make causes this to decrease by ten points. At the end of the level the points you have left will be added to your main score.

Shareware by: T.J. & J.R. Washtell.

Registration: £5.00.



(Right) Monsters lie in wait along the path to home.
(Below) A trio - same shape, same shading but different colours.

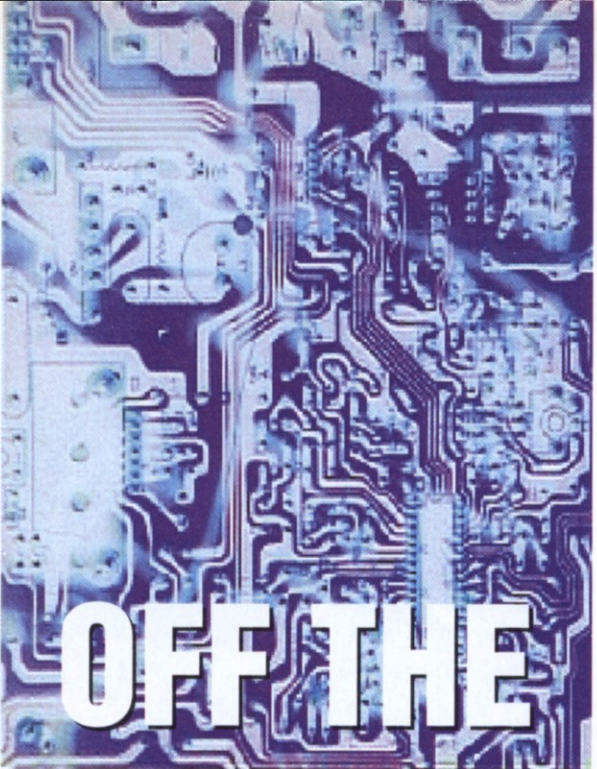
TRIO

TRIO IS A LOT LIKE those old intelligence tests that decided whether or not you were good enough to join Garry Bushell in Mensa. There is a 3 x 4 spread of cards and you must form a trio with each of the four attributes the same or different. The attributes are quantity, shape, colour and shading and there are three of each. The full game has 69 cards but you can play with 36 or even 12. As a game it is hard but very rewarding. There is a hint feature which will tell you how many trios there are and of what sort, and 'answer' which will show you what they are (and end the game).

Shareware from: Torensoft Consulting of Canada.

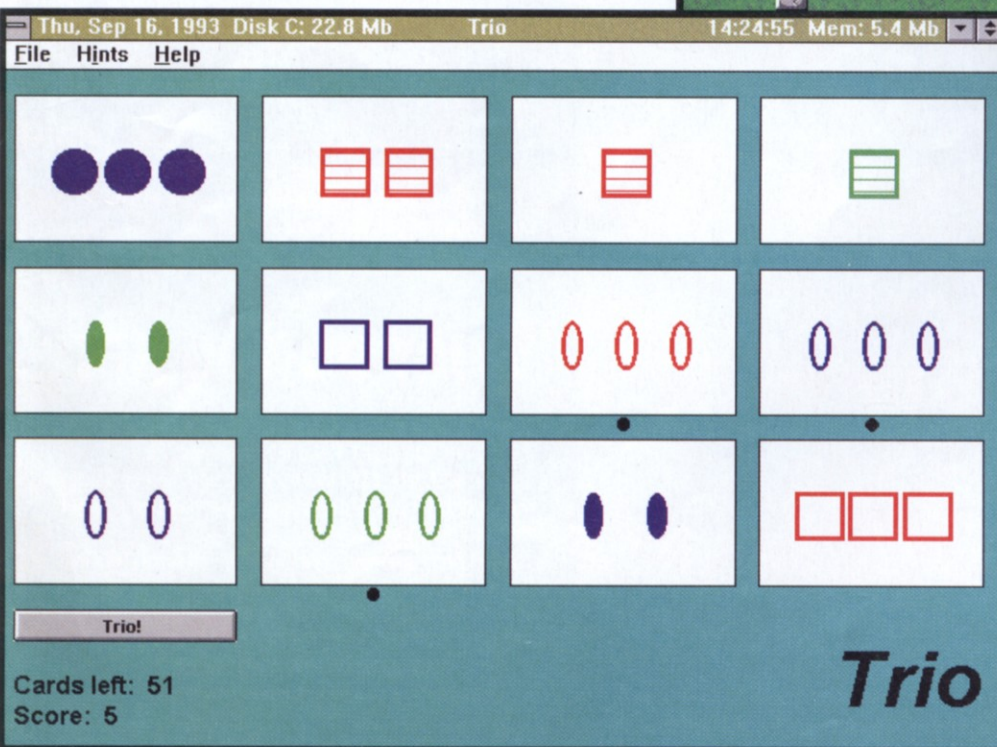
Registration: \$10.00 US or \$12.00 Canadian.

Needs: Windows and a 286.



OFF THE BOARDS

Mark Burgess rounds up shareware games beginning with 'T', minds his manners and looks at some really rather good CD collections.



TailGunner 1.0



TAILGUNNER

TailGunner isn't really boring; it just looks that way.

TAILGUNNER IS A SPACE COMBAT game and the rules are simple: shoot all the ships before they get you. You are the Tailgunner on a spaceship that is making a run out of enemy territory and being pursued by a large group of fighters. They will attack you in waves and you must defend yourself with your plasma cannons and pulse lasers. The lasers are controlled with the left button, and the cannons with the right. To fire them, aim the crosshairs on the target and click a mouse button. At the top of the screen are two indicators that will flash when you are lined up over a target; you should hit something if you fire when they flash. When you do hit a ship, you will hear it. And when you destroy a ship you will see it.

There are three different enemy ships in *TailGunner*. The first ship you will see will be the Transport Gunboat. It is well armoured and will require four hits with the laser or two hits with the cannon to destroy it. The two other ships are much faster but are not shielded from attack, their destruction requires two hits with the laser or one with the cannon.

Your shields will take at least 20 hits before failing, but your hull is good for no more than six hits. Your shields regenerate themselves as the game progresses, but if they get damaged to the point at which they fail, your ship's hull will take the damage. To keep this from happening you can transfer excess power from your weapons to your shields. Once your shields have failed you can still bring them back. Your weapons also recharge themselves during the game.

The enemy ships can appear too suddenly but, fortunately, there is an auto-tracking feature to locate them. This locates the ship when it first comes into range but doesn't follow it.

TailGunner can be played at absolutely any screen resolution. The screen maximises on startup of the game, but you can re-size it at any time.

Shareware by: Ian Firth for Diversions Software.

Registration: \$15.00.

Needs: An AT or better, VGA, Windows 3.1 and VBRUN300.DLL. Supports MPC compatible soundcards.



WHAT IS PUBLIC DOMAIN AND SHAREWARE?

PUBLIC DOMAIN

This is software that's free. You can copy and distribute it as you like. The only conditions are that you do not pass the work off as your own, do not incorporate it within another program without due credit and, of course, that you do not charge money for something you have got for nothing.

SHAREWARE

This is software that asks for a registration fee, either after a specific time or 'if found useful'. The fee varies enormously and you are morally obliged to pay it or stop using the program, although it is true that many programs ask you to send \$5.00 to an address in Wichita. A leading shareware author recently estimated that about 90% of users don't register. Registration brings the latest version of the program, a place on the mailing list for updates and a properly printed manual. Not to mention a glow of moral satisfaction.

BANNERWARE/ ADWARE

This is a program where the author does not ask for any payment but reserves copyright. This means that you have a free licence to use and copy the game.

DEMONSTRATIONS

Many commercial software houses will release a playable demo of their latest games so that you have some idea of what you're expected to pay £50.00 for. Not often found in libraries, they tend to live on the cover of magazines or on bulletin boards.

WHAT DO YOU GET?

The disk should contain a file called READ.ME or README.1ST. Read it by typing TYPE README.1ST MORE. There will also be some sort of batch (.BAT) file. Typing in the name of it should load the program.

Most programs will come in archived form. This is because the library is trying to fit as much information as possible on a 760K disk. The files will have extensions like .ARC, .ARJ, .LHA, .PAK, .ZIP or (very rare) .ZOO but the disk will come with a program that will decompress the files, together with instructions on how to use it.



Manners



IF YOU'RE A FIRST time user of Bulletin Boards, there are some conventions you should be aware

of. You don't have to use them, but others will so you might as well know what they mean. Because of the cost of being on-line there are many abbreviations, and because of the limitations of the ASCII character set there are attempts to show facial expressions. To use capital letters in a message means that you are shouting and considered bad form unless you are actually drowning.

CIS EXPRESSIONS

BTW	By The Way
CIS	Consumer Information Service (of CompuServe)
FWIW	For What It's Worth
G,D&RF	Grinning, Ducking and Running Fast
GMTA	Great Minds Think Alike
IMCO	In My Considered Opinion
IMHO	In My Humble Opinion
JIC	Just In Case
LOL	Laughing Out Loud
OBTW	Oh, By The Way
OIC	Oh, I See!
OTF	On The Floor
OTOH	On The Other hand
OTTH	On The Third hand
PITA	Pain In The Arse
PMFJI	Pardon Me For Jumping In
PMJI	Pardon My Jumping In
PPN	Programmer Project Number; ie, a CIS user's ID#.
ROFL	Rolling On Floor, Laughing
RSN	Real Soon Now
RTFM	Read The F*****g Manual
TSR	Terminate and Stay Resident program
WYSIWYG	What You See Is What You Get

FACIAL EXPRESSIONS

(turn this page 90 degrees clockwise):

:~)	Humour
:~)	Wink
P~)	Pirate
:~)	Incredulity
:~V	Shout
<:~O	Eek!
:~*	Oooops (covering mouth with hand)
:~D	Said with a smile
:~#	Censored
:~i	Smoking
:~I	It's something, but I don't know what...
:~x	Kiss
:~>	Happy face
:~(Unhappy
:~c	Very unhappy
:~C	Unbelieving
:~<	Forlorn
:~	Disgusted
:~?	Licking your lips
:~J	Tongue-in-cheek comments
<~)	For stupid questions
OO	Headlights on message
...—...	s.o.s.
*	Handshake offered
*)	Handshake accepted

BULLETIN BOARDS

CIX

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The Farm BBS

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0223 208 094 [view]

All major protocols

Information: 0223 208 288 (voice)

Microland BBS

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SHAREWARE

CD-ROMS



D ROMS ARE IDEAL for shareware. You can browse through hundreds of programs without the expense of being on-line or waiting for an untried program on disk. It isn't good news all the way: authors fear that people will be even less inclined to register if the program comes on CD. Shareware CDs used to be derided as 'shovelware' – anything and everything was shoved on to fill up the space – but the quality has improved dramatically. In fact the man who called them shovelware now distributes his own.

Games 1993/ Giga Games

GAMES 1993 CONTAINS a huge selection of games with the Zipmaster installation program. There are many cheats, a full set of Apogee games, some 1500 arcade games and 70 versions of Tetris alone.

Giga Games has about 2500 programs and is a very good selection of games and utilities with an easy menu system.

Publisher: CD Xpress **Price:** £19.00 each

Address: 39 Wanstead Park Rd, Ilford, Essex IG1 3TG **Tel:** 081 514 2741



Libris Britannia

THE PUBLIC DOMAIN and Shareware Library has been around for years. This CD has the best of their collection. The PDSL is biased towards utilities although there are a few games and Flight Sim add-ons. This disk really comes into its own on those occasions when you need a program to do something weird – like change .DBF files to .WPS – and wonder if anyone has written one. There are utilities to cover just about any emergency and some excellent communication, graphics and business programs. The menu system is easy, if rugged, and has a search facility (though only to classification level). The disk contains about 1.2Gb of software.

Publisher: PDSL **Price:** £53.00

Address: PDSL, Winscombe House, Beacon Rd., Crowborough, Sussex, TN6 1UL **Tel:** 0892 663 298.



JCSM Shareware Collection/Top 2000+ Shareware

THE JCSM SHAREWARE collection covers all major categories. It's a bit weak on Arcade and action games but good on graphics.

Top 2000 + shareware has over 600Mb of programs. Although the label says 'games and education oriented' this is a comprehensive collection with a good menuing system and a .GIF viewer.

Publisher: Magnetic Media

Price: JCSM Shareware Collection costs £15.00, Top 2000 + Shareware costs £14.00.

Address: Magnetic Media, Brent House, 24-26 Friern Park, London N12 9DA **Tel:** 081 343 9933



The Silver Collection

THERE ARE FOUR DISKS in this collection, which contains the best of the Farm BBS. As you'd expect, this compilation is very strong on games. All major Apogee games are here. Disk one contains games, demos, education, hints and cheats. Disk two has utilities, graphics and drivers (together with an excellent .GIF viewer). Disk three has music packages and files together with comms programs and fonts. Disk four has business, mathematical and other fun stuff.

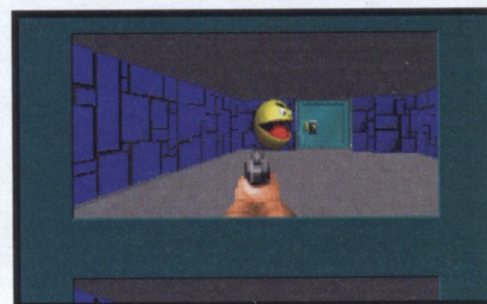
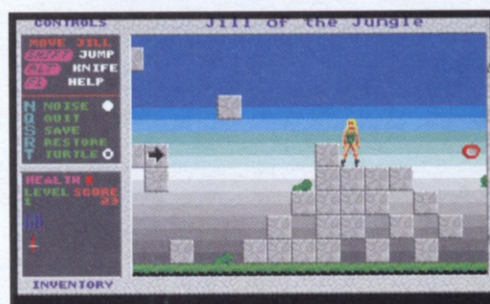
Publisher: PSP **Price:** The CDs are £31.66 each but a better bargain is £72.00 for all four. PSP issue monthly CD updates (£12.99).

Address: PSP, 3 Valley Court Offices, Lower Rd., Croydon, Nr Royston, Herts SG8 0HF

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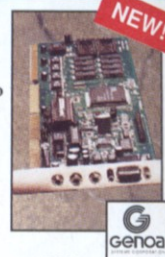
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FEATURE CD-ROM Guide.

ISSUE 6 Order Ref. AW06A

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FREE DISKS Disk A: Sink Or Swim (5 playable levels) Disk B: Bio Menace (complete game) Disk C: Manga Mayhem (Anime Graphics)

REVIEWS Lands Of Lore/Seal Team/Lost Vikings/Clash Of Steel/Rules Of Engagement 2/Patricia/NHL Hockey/Ambush at Sorinor/Simon The Sorcerer.

FEATURE Move On Up (Upgrades)/The CD Side of Software/Anime in the UK/On The Boards.

ISSUE 8 Order Ref. AW08A

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REVIEWS Lost In Time/Flight Sim 5/Conquered Kingdoms/Arcade For Windows/ Patriot/ Stronghold/Silver Seed/Troddlers/Gateway II.

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Mr Cursor

HE'S AFRAID OF HIS PC



VEN IF YOU haven't bought the actual game you should have sampled EA's *Seal Team*, thanks to the playable mission on last month's cover disk – meaning you're already half prepared for this month's Mr Cursor. To be fully prepared, however, you also need to have seen, on ITV, a recent episode of the networked American series *Tour Of Duty*. Yes? Then brilliant, we're ready to roll. No? Then let me quickly explain a couple of things: *Tour Of Duty* seems to be written and produced by a team of confused American liberals (with a very small 'L' but a wackingly large 'C'). They acknowledge that the Vietnam War may have been slightly incorrect politically, but go to great lengths to portray all the American soldiers involved (especially the white ones) as paragons of virtue, whether drafted or otherwise. Let me put it another way: my pet name for *Tour Of Duty* is *Little House In Pnom Penh*... and I now present my very own *Seal Team* mission (one I feel EA should

have included), based totally and unashamedly on the unintentionally hilarious aforementioned TV series. Oh, and by the way, put the spoken dialogue down to an imaginary CD version of the game.

Three American nuns and their charge – a Vietnamese orphan girl called Chin Ling – are lost in the jungle after a plane crash. Chin Ling is suffering from leukaemia and is in urgent need of a bone marrow transplant. Your insertion and extraction will be by helicopter, but you may have to make it back to base on foot because the VC have SAMs at their disposal. SARGE: So much for the chopper... and our radio's been shot to heck too. BRENT: Should we go check for the pilot, Sarge? He could still be alive. SARGE: No, he'll be dead – but young Chin Ling still has a chance if we can somehow... BUZZ: ...if we can somehow reach her in time. Yes, she's ill, Sarge. She's *darned* ill, goddamit. SARGE: You think I don't know that, soldier? You think I don't know how ill she is? BUZZ: Sorry Sarge, I guess you know it better 'n all of us. Goddam it, Sarge, this war is hell. SARGE: It sure as heck is soldier. Let's move on out boys. I'll take point.

Days later...

CHUCK: Sarge, I think I just seen some... er... penguins over there... they're like in that pampas grass. BRENT: Hey, you been smoking some of that Mary Jane or sumthin'? CHUCK: No way man, I don't never touch dope man. BUZZ: Uh... Hey Sarge, I just seen the penguins too, an' I ain't never touched any of that Reefer stuff before neither...

SARGE: Y'all sure as hell better not have done soldier. Hey! I see 'em too. And yo, them ain't penguins men, them there's the nuns.

BRENT: You're right Sarge! An' look, there's li'l Chin Ling! But are we in time?

Seconds later

NUN 1: ...Young Chin Ling's red blood cells have been overwhelmed I'm afraid. She seems to be slipping away from us. You're too late.

BUZZ: NO! NO! NO! Sarge, you can't let her die – she's just a baby! Do sumthin' goddamit, you gotta do sumthin'!

SARGE: You're right soldier! I've got an idea. Chuck, what blood group are ya?

CHUCK: 'A' rhesus negative, Sarge: eight pints of the stuff, with marrow to match!

SARGE: That's close enough soldier. Sister, do you reckon we can...

NUN 1: Yes, I believe we *can* sergeant. Sister Anne is a qualified surgeon as well as a nun, and we happen to have some crude bone marrow transplant equipment with us. There's a danger, however, that your brave donor may perish during the operation – after all, the jungle isn't the most hygienic place to carry out an operation of this nature.

CHUCK: I'm willing to take the risk Sarge, even if I die. Well, it's a small price to pay for the life of this plucky young Vietnamese orphan girl. Jeez, it's almost as if she's my goddam daughter or sumthin', d'you know Sarge? I love her, goddamit.

During the lengthy operation

The VC (who have been following the nuns for a couple of days) suddenly open fire. Sarge, Buzz and Brent return arms. Brent is injured, but Sister Catherine takes his rifle and joins the fray. Sister Margaret takes Chuck's unused rifle and follows suit. After 45 minutes the few remaining VC retreat, their ammunition spent and their morale in tatters. And then a note of extra cheer...

NUN 3: Chin Ling is well again – the transplant has been 100 percent successful – and your gallant marrow-donating soldier is still alive. In fact he's on his feet, bouncing around vivaciously and playing his saxophone. It's a miracle.

NUN 2: Hallelujah! And I killed four Gooks in that shoot-out!

NUN 1: Four, huh? Well, I got seven!

BUZZ: Ha ha! Me too, I got seven too... one of them in the eye.

SARGE: Well I got 12, but the important thing is that Chin Ling is cured. And the icing on top of the cake is the fact that not only did we somehow capture all the SAM equipment but that the radio has suddenly started working again... and an extraction 'copter is on the way. I think you all deserve a reward, so three weeks R&R for every darned man jack of you (including the nuns). And as for Chin Ling, well, the adoption papers should go through without a hitch – or I'll be onto the President to find out why.

CHUCK: Adoption papers? Chin Ling? Who's gonna be the dad, Sarge, me or you?

SARGE: Both of us, soldier... both of us.

CHIN LING: Papa! Papa! ☑



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'Yeah, we kill the yang and we'll be helping the yin, man. Then we kill the yin and we'll be helping the yang...'

'Wow, like that's really cool, man. Yeah... wow... we're like... angels and devils. Bringers of life and of death.'

'Far out! It's like we're closing the circle... and like, er, opening the doors of infinity.'

'Okay men, let's move out.'

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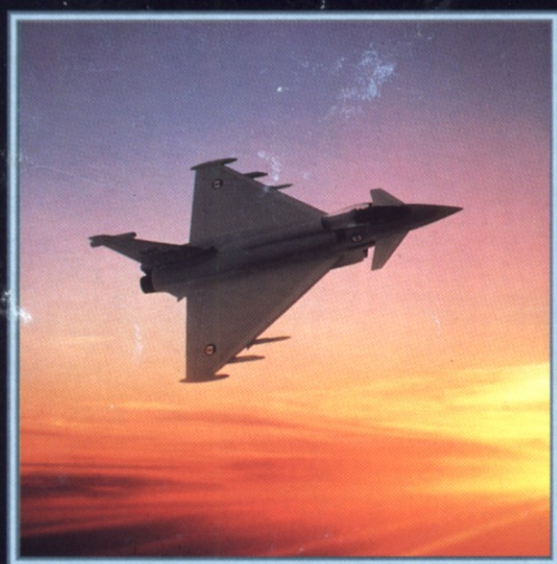
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